

Purdue University Laboratory Animal Program Standards of Care

Title: Husbandry Care of Horses and Donkeys

I. Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to outline the minimum standards of care for horses.

II. Policy:

All units providing animal care for horses and donkeys used in agricultural research and teaching must meet or exceed these minimum requirements based on the *Guide for the Care and Use of Agricultural Animals Used in Research (Ag Guide)*. Horses and donkeys used in biomedical research and non-standard Ag practice teaching must additionally meet the requirements in the USDA Animal Welfare Regulations (*AWR*) and the *Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals (Guide)*.

III. Procedure:

Daily (365 days a year):

- Observe each animal and check for health concerns (*Ag Guide* pg. 22).
- Ensure adequate feed and ad libitum potable water is available (*Ag Guide* p. 21).
- Horses and donkeys housed inside or where they cannot graze should be fed and watered at least twice a day (*Ag Guide* pg. 117).
- Remove contaminated or spoiled food.
- Record and report sick animals to the Lab Animal Program (LAP) and/or designated clinical veterinarian per standard operating procedure (*AWR 2.33, Ag Guide* pg. 10).
- Remove wet bedding and feces from stalls (*Ag Guide* pg. 115).
- Record daily completion of each task, initial each task, and date the log.

As needed:

- Remove excreta and food waste to ensure worker and animal health (*Ag Guide* pg. 20).
- Sanitize primary enclosures, feed bunks, and surrounding environment (*Ag Guide* pg. 20, 115).
- Remove and replace worn or damaged equipment from primary enclosures and surrounding facility (*Guide* pg. 72).
- Maintain feed stuffs and remove spoiled or contaminated feeds (*Ag Guide* pg. 21). Expiration dates for bagged feed must be readily available.
- Clean and sanitize feed storage containers (*Ag Guide* pg. 21).
- Each facility will develop their own best practices with sanitization typically occurring every 6 months or whenever there is a change in species but may vary with facility.

Environmental Enrichment:

- Refer to the Social and Environmental Enrichment Program for Research and Teaching Animals (IACUC SOP #: 305)

Housing:

- Facilities for horses and donkeys should provide physical accommodations that allow for normal postural adjustments at will, and permit the horse to lie down, stand up, turn around, and roll (*Ag Guide* pg. 113).
- Floors shall be selected for ease of cleaning and for sanitation, comfort, and safety of the horse or donkey, with proper bedding for indoor facilities (*Ag Guide* pg. 114).
- For outdoor housing, sufficient shade and shelter should be provided to protect from the elements (*Ag Guide* pg. 115).
- Outdoor structures should be free of trash, holes, and other dangerous objects (*Ag Guide* p. 115).
- Whenever possible, horses and donkeys should be socially housed based on compatibility (*Ag Guide* pg. 115).
- Space requirements for agricultural research and teaching horses and donkeys can be found in Table 8-1 of the *Ag Guide* pg. 113.
- Space requirements differ for biomedical research and agricultural use animals. Specific space requirements can be found in the *Guide* and the *Ag Guide*, respectively (see appendix 1).