



OFFICE OF LABORATORY ANIMAL CARE

Working Instructions

WIN Number:	111	Vole Health Check	Revision #:	0
Date Effective:	11/21/24		Supersedes:	0

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PROCEDURE

All work instructions must be demonstrated by the trainer and performed by the trainee.

Safety:

1. For mid and high-level cages, use a step stool. Moving or lifting anything above the head is discouraged.
2. Visualize lower cages by kneeling onto your knees. Use knee protection for kneeling on the ground.
3. Animal handling: Wear leather or other approved bite-resistant gloves.

Health Check:

1. Perform health checks in the morning unless instructed otherwise by the Facility Supervisor or Veterinarian.
2. Assess every cage for health abnormalities, use a flashlight when necessary.
3. Mark health concerns with a pink health check Post-it® and immediately report the health concern by sending a message to the "health-usda" slack group.
4. Remove dead animals from the cage and place them in a bag.
 - a. Label the bag with room number, cage number, date, and PI name.
 - b. Mark the cage card with a red dot labeled "FDIC", the number of animals found dead, and the date.
 - c. Place the carcass into the bin with the corresponding day of the week in the carcass storage area.
 - d. Report the dead animal by sending a message to the "health-usda" slack group.

This list is non-inclusive and other health concerns may arise. If unsure, always contact vet staff.

Emergency Health Concerns

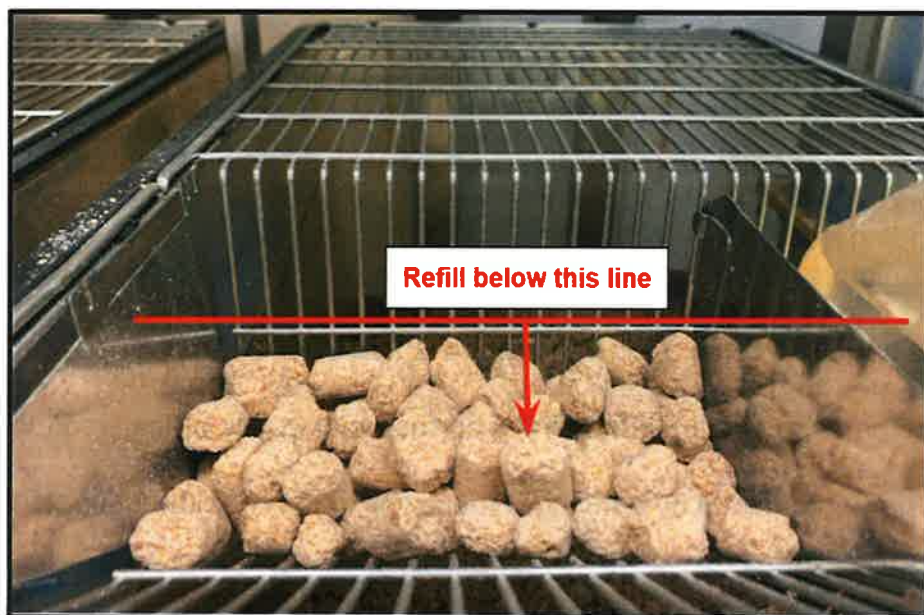
- Hunched posture & scruffy (ruffled) fur: With no/low activity level
- Moribundity: Near death
- Breathing problems: Exaggerated, Increased or decreased breathing
- Paralysis: Complete loss of use of one or more limbs
- Dystocia: Problems or difficulty giving birth
- Seizure: May lay on side and paddle or rhythmically move limbs
- Severe wounds: Large or deep open wounds
- Masses or swelling: Anywhere on the body, with open wounds
- Prolapse (uterine, vaginal, rectal and penile): Tissue that is normally held within the body is hanging outside of the body

Non-Emergency Health Concerns

- Low Body Condition/Thin Body
- Overweight
- Hunched posture & scruffy (ruffled) fur: with normal activity level
- Malocclusion: Misaligned or overgrown teeth
- Dermatitis: Inflamed/irritated skin or skin lesions
 - Fighting/Minor fight wounds: animals observed fighting and/or pinpoint lesions (animals will be separated immediately)
- Necrotic digits: Digits (fingers/toes) appear discolored
- Masses or swelling: Anywhere on the body, with no open wounds
- Microphthalmia/Anophthalmia: Small/absent eye
- Eye conditions: Swelling, discharge, discoloration, or bulging
- Gait/Locomotion: Problems moving around normally, staggering, or limping
- Head tilt: Head is tilted to one side and/or animal is rolling or circling
- Abnormal skin color: Yellow, blue or pale

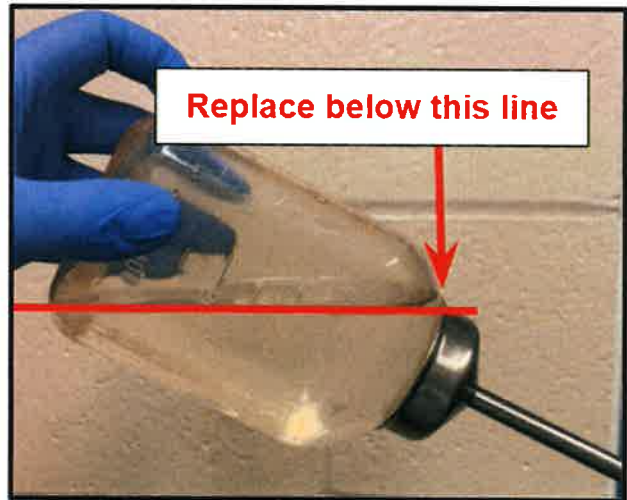
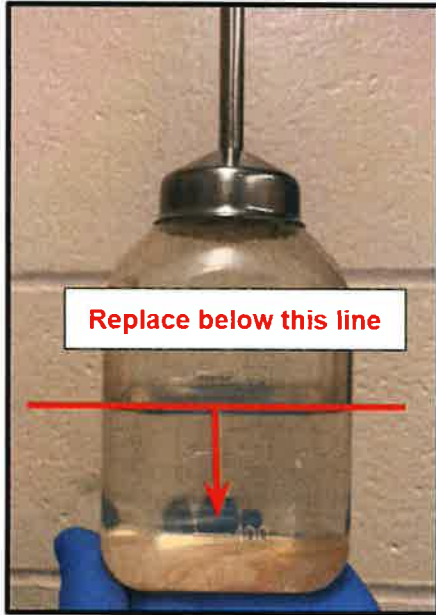
Feed:

1. Feed animals approved diet ad libitum.
2. Feed must be at least half ($\frac{1}{2}$) full and free of mold/moisture.
3. Fill the food hopper with food once it falls below half ($\frac{1}{2}$) of the food hopper.



Water:

1. Provide water ad libitum from an approved source (NAF cage wash bottle filler)
2. Replace water that is less than half (½) full

**Bedding/Cage:**

1. Assess each cage for flooding, heavy soiling, mold, and/or defective parts. Change cages found with heavy soiling, floods, mold, and/or defective parts.

Escaped Animal:

1. Contact the Vet staff and/or Facility Supervisor if capture assistance is needed. Only handle the animals if you have been trained using proper vole handling techniques.
2. If the animal escapes during routine care, attempt to capture the animal. Return the animal to the home cage.
3. If there is an animal found outside of a cage and the origin is not known, contact the Vet Staff and/or Facility Supervisor immediately.
 - a. Attempt to capture the animal.
 - b. Isolate the captured animal into an empty cage containing food and water.

REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

REVISION HISTORY			
REVISION NUMBER	AUTHOR(S)	EFFECTIVE DATE	REVISION(S)