



OFFICE OF LABORATORY ANIMAL CARE

Working Instructions

WIN Number:	801	Rabbit Health Check	Revision #:	0
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PROCEDURE

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

Health Check:

1. Perform health checks in the morning unless instructed otherwise by the Facility Supervisor or Veterinarians.
2. Assess each cage for health abnormalities, use a flashlight when necessary.
 - a. Use a step stool for mid and high-level cages.
 - b. Lower cages can be visualized by either removing the cage from the rack or by kneeling on knees.
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

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- 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
 - Nasal Discharge
- 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. Check the food hopper by lifting the top lid and fill with food when the food hopper is below half ($\frac{1}{2}$) full.
2. Replace the food hopper if signs of mold, moisture, or pests are present.
3. Check and clear the base of the feeder if blocked with debris (Ex: excess cage bedding).

Bedding/Cage:

1. Check pan liners and replace when heavily soiled. (e.g. when 50% or more of the liner is covered with water, urine, and/or feces).
 - a. Slide the cage tray out and remove the soiled liner by folding it into a small bundle, then discard it into the trash.

- b. Place a new liner into the tray and slide the tray back underneath the cage.
2. Assess each cage for flooding, heavy soiling, mold, and/or defective parts.
3. Remove any leftover dietary enrichment (e.g., fruits/vegetables) from the previous day (If applicable).

Water:

1. Provide water ad libitum from an approved source (NAF cage wash bottle filler, NAF hydropac water hose, LKS hydropac water hose).
2. Replace water that is less than half ($\frac{1}{2}$) full.
3. Check the sipper tube for leaks. If leaks are present, replace the sipper tube.

Enrichment:

1. Place enrichment into each cage according to the "Rabbit Enrichment" schedule posted in the housing room.
 - a. Enrichment offerings include toys, hay, and other approved fresh vegetables and fruits.

REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

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