The OLAC SQUEAK

YOUR RODENT USERS NEWSLETTER

Office of Laboratory Animal Care **12/1/2016** [Edition 1, Volume 1]

INTRODUCTION

New Initiatives and Strategic Planning

OLAC management recently met to develop a master plan of proposed changes to our animal care and use program. This newsletter brings these new directions to you for review and comment.

On November 3, we had a "Rodent Users Meeting" involving all investigators that use rodents in research for a discussion of changes to standardize animal care on campus, which would benefit the budget in a proactive approach. This meeting was implemented to help us decide whether or not these changes need to be made, why they may need to be made, and how they may be implemented.

Budget

We have recently received word of a budget cut of 3.5%. In taking a pro-active approach, we have determined areas where costs could be better controlled and these include: Staffing and the standardization of diet, bedding, environmental enrichment and PPE.

Staffing

OLAC will do its part by evaluating cage changes on a 3-week interval rather than every 2 weeks. Testing for ammonia and humidity levels based on caging and bedding systems will be completed before any changes are recommended. Investigators will be notified prior to any proposed change. A three-week interval will reduce staffing needs for cage changes and cage wash.

Bedding

We are currently using Sanichip, corn cob, TEKFresh and pelleted paper. In our current bedding study, all performed equally well when a standard nesting material (environmental enrichment) was used. Literature shows that wood chip (Sanichip) performs best in regards to cost, ammonia, dust and absorbency, and bedding preference for mice when compared to corncob or TekFresh. However, corncob has been shown to alter mechanical

New Service

TAGCenter By Transnetyx

A genotyping service kiosk will be placed in the LSA-6 foyer just as you exit the north side elevators. Let Transnetyx do your genotyping for you- rodent and fish! With the kiosk, the cost is greatly reduced, especially for those already using their service.

Join the Transnetyx Reps from 2-4PM on Dec. 14th at the LSA-6 North foyer for demos and help setting up your accounts. Contact Kristen Pincolini at kpincolini@berkeley.edu for access to the LSA-6 TagCenter.

If interested in giving it a try, each lab gets **25 free samples**. No commitment necessary! If interested, contact Tricia Clark at 888-321-2113 (ext. 190) or visit their website at http://www.transnetyx.com/

sensitivities in models of inflammatory and neuropathic pain and has undesirable levels of estrogenic mycotoxins. Pelleted paper has significantly lower levels of mycotoxins, but earlier ammonia production.

Environment Enrichment

A single cotton Nestlet plus a 4gm puck of crinkled paper to be transferred with cage changes is being proposed. This combination of materials provides the best nest and transferring at cage change reduces stress by maintaining familiar odors within the new cage.

Diet

We are currently using Envigo (Harlan) 6.2% fat rodent chow. We are recommending a switch to Lab Diet (Purina) 5053, 4% fat, as our standard diet, and 5058, 9% fat, for special breeding related issues. Reasons: All our approved vendors feed Lab Diet products, so acclimation should not be critical; the 4% fat tends to keep rodents well-conditioned, not overweight; supply problems with Envigo resulted in short term diet changes; increased fines (food dust) with Envigo resulting in increased waste. Any diet changes would occur gradually and with investigator knowledge to protect active research projects.

PPE

UCB OLAC, EHS, and OccHealth support research that shows that engineering standards best protect our employees from allergen exposure. Additionally, exposure of animals to infectious disease is dependent on sterilized feed, use of a cage change hood, microisolator technique, and preapproval of animal source more than PPE. We suggest a lab coat, sleeves, and gloves for handling rodents, always done within a hood. Immune compromised animals should be housed in sterilized caging with hyperchlorinated water and irradiated diet. Even gnotobiotic mice can be maintained with a system such as this for a month or more without contamination. Should current full PPE be continued, a new location for donning and doffing PPE will be determined for each facility and the use of PPE will be enforced. **Biosecurity is only as good as its least compliant user**.

Mouse Breeding Workshops

We can learn from each other through communication and collaboration. To that end, a mouse breeding training program has been set up with the first session held on November 16. The plan is to hold this class every other month or as needed to meet the community needs. The 2-hour course includes information on Environmental Factors, Anatomy and Physiology, Breeding Schemes and Trouble Shooting, Supportive Care for dams and offspring, and Weaning and Record Keeping. The class was well received and we were encouraged to provide opportunities for others having similar issues. Please check our website for class times: http://www.olac.berkeley.edu/training

Future

Keep an eye out for "Survey Monkey"—vote to help determine directions for the animal facility. We will follow up with reminders to be sure everyone will have the opportunity to have their opinions heard.

There will be another "Town Hall", hopefully sometime in the first weeks of February. We can review the "Survey Monkey" results and finalize our decisions together.

Coming Up in 2017:

a. Cage card bar coding
b. PI ability to print cage cards
c. Lab-managed email contact lists

-Dr. Gregory Lawson
Director of Office of Laboratory Animal Care