IACUC GUIDELINE: Poultry Husbandry

SOP # 506  
IACUC Approval Date: February 17 2016

Purpose:

This SOP provides general husbandry guidelines for poultry housed in facilities at TAMUC and is to be used by farm personnel.

Scope:

This guideline applies to all IACUC approved protocols subject to oversight by Texas A&M University-Commerce. The facility may have supplemental Standard Operating Procedures (SOP's) that further describe the specific manner of operation. Any deviation must be approved by IACUC prior to its inception.

Materials:

- Animal identification
- Feed, water, and bedding
- Enrichment devices
- Animal housing enclosures
- Illness/treatment records
- Nutritional supplements, vaccines

Responsibilities:

 Appropriately trained staff members are expected to monitor poultry in accordance with this guideline. Animal care staff will conduct routine health surveillance and any concerns will be reported to the Attending Veterinarian immediately.

Procedures:

Animal Care:
1. Observe all poultry daily (including weekends and holidays) for illness, injury, distress, and general condition.
2. Provide feed and water daily.
3. Feeding routine:
   - Feed animals to meet current National Research Council recommendations for poultry nutrition
   - Store feed ingredients and finished feeds in a manner that minimizes contamination
or spoilage (e.g., clean and dry area).

- Remove unconsumed feed daily from feeders and mangers.
  Check water containers daily for cleanliness and water volume.

4. Animal identification methods: identify the birds by applying wing tags/bands

5. Space requirements: House all poultry in an enclosure that meets or exceeds the recommendations in the *Guide for the Care and Use of Agricultural Animals in Agricultural Research and Teaching* (FASS, 2010).

6. Cleaning and sanitation of equipment:
   Clean feed containers daily, and scrub water troughs weekly. Clean feed and manure handling equipment between usages, and do not use manure equipment for handling feed materials. Utilize appropriate disinfectants and rinse after appropriate contact times.

7. Report any injuries or illness to the farm manager, Principal Investigator (PI), and Attending Veterinarian. **The Attending Veterinarian has to be notified prior to any action.** Refer to SOP 600 Reporting Sick Animals.

9. Quarantine Procedures
   - Segregate newly acquired poultry, and those returning to the flock, in separate enclosures for 21-30 days.
   - Assess health information to determine necessary vaccinations and/or treatments

10. Vaccination program: For non-production flocks vaccinate as per facility veterinarian recommendations.

11. Social and environmental enrichment: Ensure that all animals are housed within visual, auditory and olfactory contact with conspecifics. When possible, cohouse animals in compatible groups.

12. Potentially painful or distressful procedures
    These procedures are routinely conducted by trained professional staff unless otherwise indicated.
    i. Euthanasia and disposal of dead animals
        - **Euthanasia**
          Euthanize individual chickens as per SOP 304, Avian Euthanasia.
        - **Dispose of the carcass** by one of the following method: Compost on site

15. Records and Documentation
   - General:
     - Identify each animal with ring or wing tag
     - Maintain flock health records including: medical, vaccination, and transportation history. Refer to SOP 513 Maintaining Health and Procedure Records at TAMUC animal facilities.
     - Maintain daily husbandry records, including feeding, watering, cleaning
     - Illness/injury and treatment sheets should also be posted at the pen/pasture/barn

level. If pen design does not allow for direct posting, place documentation in a conveniently accessible location.

- Non-AV veterinary care:
  - In order to provide general veterinary care, veterinarians must sign a veterinary care agreement form, available from IACUC, before treating any TAMUC owned animals.

16. Waste management: spread collected manure on fields in compliance with state regulations or removal and disposal by farm services.

17. Personnel Safety:
   - Medical emergencies: call 911
   - When working with animals, wear appropriate PPE, observe proper hygiene, and be aware of zoonoses, allergies, and injury risks. Refer to TAMUC Occupational Health and Safety for more information.

18. Internal and External Pest Management Program: as per facility veterinarian recommendations
   - Utilize approved vendor or other licensed professional for monthly site control updates

19. Waste Management
   - Deposit non-regulated or non-infectious medical waste and soiled material in dumpsters or other designated area for removal from the facility.
   - Process bagged, regulated (infectious) medical waste following TAMUC Environmental Health and Safety (EH&S) policy. Contact EH&S for guidance.

20. Personnel Safety
   - Medical emergencies: call 911
   - When working with animals wear appropriate PPE, observe proper hygiene, and be aware of allergy, zoonosis, and injury risks. Refer to the TAMUC Occupational Health and Safety webpage for more information.

21. Animal Related Contingencies
   - Post contact information for emergency assistance in a conspicuous location within the animal facility.
   - Emergency veterinary care is available at all times including after working hours and on weekends and holidays:
     - Biomedical settings: phone Dr W. Taylor DVM DACLAM (214) 532 3420
     - Farm animal settings: contact Dr Taylor (AV) first (214) 532 3420, then Ambulatory Service Dr Kevin Gray 903-994-2909 and Dr Manning (903) 886-3911 (business hours) and (903) 886-1004 (after hours)

22. References
   - Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals, 2011; National Research
Council: http://books.nap.edu/openbook.php?record_id=12910&page=R1
National Research Council recommendations for poultry nutrition, 1994:
http://www.nap.edu/openbook.php?isbn=0309048923
Ohio State University Fact Sheet, Cleaning and Disinfection of Poultry Facilities: http://ohioline.osu.edu/vme-fact/0013.html

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