



Best Practice Recommendations: Facilitating Sharing of Animals and Animal Tissues

Background

Best practices are shared on the Three Rs Microsite as information that may assist institutions who are looking for ways to further implement the Three Rs in their animal care and use programs. They are not CCAC guidelines documents or policy statements, and will not be used by CCAC assessment panels as a basis for recommendations in assessment reports, (although assessment panels may share the information with institutions as a way to encourage implementation of the Three Rs).

These best practices are for institutions who would like to facilitate the sharing of animals and animal tissue as a means of reducing the numbers of animals used and improving the efficiency of animal use. They were developed by a working group of the CCAC Three Rs Committee and are based on analysis of examples of successful animal and tissue sharing programs (*Discussion Paper: Opportunities and Obstacles to Animal Resources Sharing in Canada*). The aim is to reduce the numbers of animals used, without increasing harms experienced by other animals.

Recommendations

Facilitating Sharing of Animals and Animal Tissue

- 1.** Collect and monitor the number of animals used for breeding and colony maintenance at the institution.
- 2.** Transition to centralization of colony management responsibilities to animal care facilities so as to: enable precise tracking of animals and tissue for sharing; maximize opportunities for use of surplus animals; and minimize over-production.
- 3.** Delegate responsibility and decision-making for colony management to centralized animal care facilities, except in situations where breeding and reproduction is an integral part of the experimental design.
- 4.** Develop criteria on how to identify colonies that no longer need to be maintained.
- 5.** Prepare an institution-wide animal use protocol to cover use of surplus animal tissues.
- 6.** Permit a type of protocol where a principal investigator can wait for a cull animal (surplus animal already destined to be killed) to become available.
- 7.** Provide scientific justification on animal use protocol applications for why surplus tissues or animals cannot be used.
- 8.** Provide dedicated funding to cover costs of coordinating an animal resource sharing program.
- 9.** Provide access to the surplus resources at no or low cost to investigators.
- 10.** Create a plan to advertise and raise awareness of this source of animal tissue and encourage investigators to use surplus tissue first and to donate resources (i.e., generating a demand for the tissue).