Animal Eye Consultants of Iowa *Instituti* *mittee*	
Policy #15	**"Pest & Predator Control in Animal Facilities"**
Approval Date: 7/31/2024 (Replaced version 2/5/2021)	

A. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure appropriate measures are taken to prevent and control the entrance of pests and predators and eradicate infestations in facilities housing research and teaching animals.

B. Background

The Animal Welfare Act, the Public Health Service Policy, the ILAR Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals, and the Guide for the Care and Use of Agricultural Animals in Agriculture Research and Teaching require an effective pest control program be in place as a component of the animal care program.

C. Policy

All units housing laboratory or teaching animals must have an effective pest control plan in place for their facility. Refer to the Safety Policies and Procedures Manual 6.30 for pest control guidance and Environmental Health and Safety.

D. Resources

1. Facility Maintenance and Design

   Building design, construction and maintenance are the primary components to preventing entrance of potential pests into animal areas.

All interior animal housing and support units must ensure that windows, doors and exterior walls are sealed to prevent entrance of pest and predators. Interior walls, drains and vents must be checked for cracks and leaks and repaired as needed. Facilities Services should be contacted when repairs are needed that require their services.

Facilities shall be kept free of clutter, unnecessary storage of equipment, and trash to prevent the harborage of pests. Cardboard boxes, feed bags, etc. should be kept off the floor. Excess vegetation should be kept trimmed around exterior sheltered housing areas, feed storage areas and barns.

Agricultural, wildlife and other sheltered/barn housing units have design limitations to prevent pest entry but need to maintain facilities to limit harborage of pests.

2. Pest Control Plan

Animal units are required to develop pest control plans specific to their pest control needs. A regularly scheduled and documented program of control and monitoring should be implemented (*Guide p.74*).

Principal Investigators and research staff must be consulted before ANY pesticides or other chemical substances will be used in animal areas or around caging, food or other items that could contact the animals to prevent any effects or unintended consequences that could affect the research experiments.

When necessary for the prevention or control of potential risks associated with pests and predators, nontoxic substances and live traps can be utilized. Any traps used should be humane (*Guide, p74*). Live and lethal (e.g., snap, spin, or electric shock) traps must be checked daily. If live and lethal traps are not checked daily a SOP must be developed with the Attending Veterinarian. Rodent glue traps must not be used. Glue traps for insect monitoring can be used; however, they should be designed to prevent rodent capture.

Zoonotic and other infectious disease agents have been identified in wild rodent populations, so care should be taken with wild rodents (refer to SPPM 6.33 Prevention of Hantavirus Exposure). Animals trapped alive should be humanely euthanized (see AVMA Guidelines). If live rodents are trapped within a rodent

vivarium, contact AEC to determine if the animal should be submitted as part of the rodent health surveillance program for testing.

The use of rodenticides and avicides for outdoor housing facilities should be a last resort and only after careful consideration. There is potential for non-target poisoning and secondary poisoning if the targeted species is poisoned, then consumed by animals housed at the facility (e.g. swine) or other animals (barn cats, raptors, etc.). Options should be discussed with your pest control provider, and rodenticides and avicides with lower risk of secondary poisoning should be selected whenever possible. If rodenticide or avicide is being used, the product information will need to be kept available for site visitors and AEC.

Use of live animals for pest and predator control: The use of live animals (e.g. barn cats, livestock guardian dogs, llamas, donkeys, falcons, etc.) for pest/predator may be appropriate in certain circumstances. Barn cats and working dogs should be properly vaccinated for rabies. For all animals used for these purposes:

1. Animals must be in apparent good health with no obvious illnesses or parasite infestations.
2. Injured or ill animals must receive timely, appropriate, and documented veterinary treatment/care.
3. Animals must have ready documentation of a preventive health program, as evidenced by current vaccination and/or testing records as appropriate (see table below).
4. Adequate food and housing for the animals must be available if in residence.
5. Animals must be appropriately restrained as needed to minimize potential injuries to themselves, personnel, students, and/or other animals.
6. Animals must have a positive temperament to minimize injury, or distress, to personnel, students, and/or other animals.

When a unique circumstance arises requiring novel pest control practices (e.g. request to bring in falconer) facilities are expected to first consult with the Attending Veterinarian (or designee) for review and approval. AEC-owned animals must be on an IACUC-approved ASAF.

Species specific requirements for animal in use as pest/predator control:

Horses	Cats	Dogs
Rabies Vaccine	Rabies Vaccine	Rabies Vaccine

Eastern/Western Equine Encephalitis Virus Vaccination	Feline panleukopenia virus vaccination	Distemper/Adenovirus/Parvovirus Vaccination
Tetanus Vaccination	Feline herpesvirus vaccination	
West Nile Virus Vaccination	Feline calicivirus vaccination	
Current Negative Coggins test (EIA)	Feline leukemia virus vaccination (noncore – optional)	

E. References

1) Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals, 8th Edition. 2011
2) Guide for the Care and Use of Agricultural Animals in Research and Teaching, 4th Edition, 2020
3) Animal Welfare Act (AWA, Public Law 89-544, 7 U.S.C.)
4) AEC Zoonotic Disease Fact sheets