

Subject: Use of Sterilized or Irradiated Rodent Feed

Source: Office of Laboratory Animal Resources

Effective Date: 11/09/2020

Replaces:

Applies to: Personnel involved in research or teaching studies involving animals

Reference: Animal Welfare Act; PHS Policy on Humane Care & Use of Laboratory Animals; Guide for the Care & Use of Laboratory Animals



Introduction

Aside from introducing live animals into a colony and indirect contact between animal populations through unrestricted personnel traffic, contamination of the diet with rodent pathogens, in particular Mouse Parvovirus, has been shown to be a risk for introduction of unwanted microorganisms. Rodent diets are made from grain based commodities and may harbor a pathogen that when consumed may transmit it to animal. Because the Office of Laboratory Animal Medicine (OLAR) at the University of Colorado Denver | Anschutz Medical Campus has been mandated to maintain a Specific Pathogen Free (SPF) program due to the devastating impact of adventitious infections on research program we require that all rodent feed be irradiated or sterilizable in order to gain entry into any clean animal facility.

Policy Statement

All rodent feed must be irradiated prior to entry into the animal facility or be labeled sterilizable to be autoclaved within the facility prior to being fed to any rodent in a clean animal facility operated by OLAR.

Procedures

- OLAR will only order Irradiated Feed for any diets it orders directly.
- Principal Investigators that would like to use Special Diets, must work with their supplier to have the diet irradiated or supplied in a sterilizable form.
- Large quantities of Special diet should be kept in an investigators lab.
- Special diets that have been in a contaminated facility are not permitted in a clean animal facility run by OLAR.
- Special diets will be brought to the loading dock of the animal facility operated by OLAR.
- The outer container will be disposed of or decontaminated.
- The food will be placed in a new container. It may be aliquoted depending on the quantity.
- Special diets will be held in special coolers in the clean animal facility and only a reasonable working volume will be placed in the animal room.
- Diets to be moved to the animal rooms must be requested from the OLAR staff at least 2 business days prior to the date it is needed.
- Diet that has been in the housing room is not permitted to go back to the special coolers in the facility.
- Refrigerated storage of diet at the housing room level must be supplied by the investigative staff, as OLAR does not have small refrigerators for each half suite to store food. Principal Investigators are permitted to share diet storage.
- The additional cost of providing irradiated diets will be covered by the Principal Investigator

Per regulatory requirements, failure to comply with this policy may result in notification of your funding agency (e.g. NIH) and regulatory agencies (e.g. USDA) that your research has violated federal and/or local policies regarding the humane use of animals. This notification may affect continuous funding of your animal-related research. Further, depending on the violation, you may be required to take additional training and/or your privilege to conduct animal research at CU Denver | Anschutz might be temporarily suspended or even completely revoked.