

Animal Resource Sharing Program

Comparative Medicine Program

Texas A&M University

Program Summary

As part of Texas A&M University's continuing commitment to reducing the number of animals used in research, the Comparative Medicine Program has in place a three part Animal Resource Sharing Program. The CMP Health Division maintains a database of animals/tissues available for resource sharing. Sharing animals and tissues reduces the total number of animals used in research, results in more efficient animal use, decreases research costs, and supports innovation.

Even the most carefully managed breeding colony will produce a surplus of animals. Resource sharing allows Texas A&M University to follow Russell and Burch's "Three Rs" of animal welfare (replacement, reduction, and refinement). The "Three Rs" are also included in *The Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals (The Guide)*, which is the primary source of guidelines utilized in animal care facilities through the United States. It is these guidelines, along with regulations from the USDA, Public Health Service (PHS), and the Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare (OLAW) that are enforced by Texas A&M University's Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC). All animals being used for research, teaching, and testing are monitored by the IACUC in compliance with the above mentioned regulations.

Things to consider:

- Animals from the Shared Resources Program are usually from investigator breeding colonies. As such, these animals are frequently many generations removed from their originating vendor. Though a strain may be indicated, the generation gap may cause genotypic variation not present in the originators and specific strain/genotype parameters are not guaranteed.
- Due to variation of breeding and animal use, availability of animals is not guaranteed. If a specific age, strain, gender, or time frame is required, ordering animals from an approved vendor is recommended.

Part 1 - Tissues

This program allows for the post-mortem collection of tissue(s) from donor animals up for euthanasia in investigator colonies. Animals will be euthanized according to the IACUC approved protocol from which the originated and provided to the requestor for tissue harvest. Tissue collection is the responsibility of the requester.

Please complete the "Tissue Share Request Form" and submit to the CMP Health Division if you would like to use this service. CMP will notify you when animals meeting your requirements are available and will schedule euthanasia and tissue collection. No additional paperwork is

needed. While the tissues are provided at no cost, any extra supplies provided to the receiving investigative staff will be charged to their account as indicated.

Part 2 – Live Animal Transfer

This program provides live animals for transfer from one TAMU IACUC approved protocol to another TAMU IACUC approved protocol. For live animals to be transferred the following conditions must be met:

1. The receiving investigator must have an IACUC approved protocol which:
 - a. allows for the transfer of animals from another IACUC approved protocol (“Source of Animals”).
 - b. has space available for the animals being transferred.
2. The donating investigator must have elected “Internal Transfer to Another AUP” at the completion of their experiment on their IACUC approved protocol (“Completed Experiment”).
3. The receiving investigator must sign a statement ensuring that the animals being transferred will only be used for the specific procedures stated in the IACUC approved protocol they are being transferred to.

Please complete the “Live Animal Request Form” and submit to the CMP Health Division if you would like to use this service. While the transferred live animals are provided at no cost, per diems and any extra supplies provided to the receiving investigative staff will be charged to their account as indicated. CMP will notify you when animals meeting your requirements are available and will begin the animal transfer process which includes:

1. Completion of the “Animal Transfer Form” by both the donating and receiving investigator.
2. Review of the transfer by appropriate CMP staff.
3. Relocation of animals as needed.
4. Creation of new Cage Cards.

Part 3 – Use as Food Animals

Animal Resource Sharing eligible animals that are not utilized as part of the Tissue Share or Live Animal Transfer portions of the program are euthanized according to the approved IACUC protocol and made available as food for reptiles, birds of prey, etc. Please complete the “Food Animal Request Form” and submit to the CMP Health Division if you would like to use this service.

Please contact the CMP Health Division for more information concerning the Animal Resource Sharing Program (979) 845-3084.