



TITLE: Guinea Pig Husbandry

SOP Category: Husbandry

CMR SOP #: 3.11

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Approval: *Lisa Antonucci*

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SCOPE:

This document provides direction and guidance on the daily husbandry and care of Guinea Pigs housed in Rutgers University animal facilities. This SOP applies to all Animal Care Staff (ACS), ACS Supervisors (ACSS), Veterinary Staff (VS), and Research Staff members (RS) at all Rutgers animal facilities.

OBJECTIVE:

The objective of this SOP is to ensure that all Guinea Pigs are cared for in a humane manner and in accordance with *The Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals* and Animal Welfare Act regulations. This SOP also covers receiving Guinea Pigs into the animal facilities.



PROCEDURES:

Animal Receipt

- Upon animal arrival, the ACS will:
 - Spray the crate with an appropriate disinfectant
 - receive the crated animals and take to the housing room
 - open the crate and perform a visual check for obvious evidence of disease or injury
 - check for animal identification number and record on cage card and all pertinent documents
 - If the Guinea Pig does not have a permanent identification, a unique number will be assigned and logged on the records
 - remove Guinea Pig from crate using proper technique and carefully place into cage
 - House Guinea Pigs two per box (unless otherwise noted)
- Place prepared animal RFID cage cards on the cage, using a plastic card holder.
- **Each individual Guinea Pig needs its own RFID card - not one per box.**



- Review the paperwork and give to the ACSS.
- Guinea Pigs will receive a physical examination by VS within 72 hours of arrival and prior to any research use.
- See *SOP #7.05 USDA Receiving and Medical Records*

Daily Care and Husbandry

Guinea Pig Feeding

- Guinea Pigs are fed *LabDiet 5025 Guinea Pig Diet* pellets ad libitum.
- Food hoppers will be checked daily and filled as needed.
- Invert feeder or scoop out debris in the bottom of feeder daily to ensure that the animal can access food.
- Ad lib, loose timothy hay and/or cubes are fed daily and placed in an appropriate device to allow Guinea Pigs easy access.
- A variety of food treats (Bunny Blocks, vegetables, fruit etc.) will be added to the home cage as per *SOP #6.04 Guinea Pig Environmental Enrichment*.
- Guinea Pig pellets, hay, cubes, and treats are stored in an airtight feed container in room or animal feed refrigerator and discarded according to manufacturer recommendations.
- Feed containers are washed before new feed is added.



Water

- Guinea Pigs will be provided with two water bottles per box.
- Bottles should be emptied and refilled daily and replaced weekly.



Caging

- Guinea pigs are housed in a solid bottom cage, either suspended on a rack or sitting on a cart/table.
- Two 700 ml cups Biofresh Performance bedding or a combination of Biofresh and Beta Chips are added to the smaller boxes.
- Four 700 ml cups of bedding are added to the larger boxes.
- Techboard may be placed on the bottom of box for extra cushioning and foot protection.
- Guinea Pig boxes will be changed two to three times a week.
- Wire bar lids, food hoppers and shelters should be replaced every other week.



Room Maintenance

- See *SOP #3.01 Room Check/Care Procedures*

Enrichment

- See *SOP #6.28 Guinea Pig Environmental Enrichment*

Veterinary Care

- See *SOP #7.19 Veterinary Care USDA Small Mammals*

