



***Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee
Guidelines and Policies***

Approved 4/15/09

GUIDELINES: DEFINITION OF ANIMAL

USDA Definition: The Animal Welfare Act Regulations (AWAR) define an animal as "any live or dead dog, cat, nonhuman primate, guinea pig, hamster, rabbit, or any other warm-blooded animal, which is being used or is intended for use for research, teaching, testing, experimentation, or exhibition purposes." *AWAR excludes birds, rats, and mice bred for use in research.*

PHS (NIH) Definition: "Any live, vertebrate animal used or intended for use in research, research training, experimentation, or biological testing, or for related purposes." *PHS includes birds, rats, and mice bred for use in research.*

The IACUC is charged with ensuring that the University is in compliance with all federal regulations and has thus adopted a "combined" USDA and PHS definition for what constitutes an animal.

If your project involves *any live vertebrate animal*, you must have an approved IACUC animal use protocol before any activities can occur. (If it has a spinal cord it requires a protocol.) In the animal protocol, you must assign a Pain/Distress Category to all procedures in which live vertebrate animals will be used.

The IACUC does *not* consider embryos or fetuses live animals.

- Rats or mice are considered animals after birth.
- Birds and amphibians and are considered animals after hatching.
- Fish are considered animals after hatching and after the yolk sac is depleted such that the hatchlings/fry require an external source of food.