



University Animal Care Committee

Policy on Mouse Overcrowding

The University Animal Care Committee (UACC) has adopted a policy which establishes guidelines for appropriate environmental conditions and methodology for in-house breeding of mice. These guidelines follow the Canadian Council on Animal Care's standards in promoting animal health and wellbeing.

Overcrowding or mismanaged breeding practices can lead to reduced floor space per mouse and impacts on animal welfare. Impacts of high cage density can lead to elevated ammonia levels which causes stress, increased aggression, reduced breeding productivity, and litter mortality.

Individually ventilated mouse cages (IVC) should have no more than 5 adult mice per cage. The breeding scheme must be described within the Animal Use Protocol (AUP).

The approved breeding schemes are:

- 1) Monogamous pairing: 1 male: 1 female per cage
- 2) Trio grouping: 1 male: 2 females: Breeders must be separated prior to parturition

Trio breeding is only permitted provided the breeding group is separated prior to parturition and the breeding scheme is approved in the AUP. Separation of breeding females is required to avoid multiple litters housed in one cage and reduces the risk of post-partum mating, which can occur 14-28 hours post parturition. Multiple litters in a cage may lead to overcrowding and trampling of newborn pups by pre-existing juveniles. Principal Investigators (PIs) that wish to deviate from the

Overcrowded Cages (Adult mice):

IVC cages that contain more than 5 mice per box will receive written notification from ACS requesting that they separate their mice. If the problem is not addressed within 24 hours, ACS will separate the mice and a \$50 technical service fee per overcrowded cage will be charged to the PI.

Revision History:

Date	New Version
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