Use of Animals in Research policy

Version Control

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V0.1		2017
V0.2	03/05/2022	Draft in new format
V0.3	06/06/2022	QC Review by HQRA
V0.4	08/08/2022	Adding the CFO as the Owner
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1 Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this policy is to set out Rothamsted Research's **(RRes)** approach to the use of animals in research and the procedures in place to ensure high animal welfare and compliance with the Animals (Scientific procedures) Act 1986 **(ASPA).**

2 Rationale

2.1 RRes supports openness regarding the essential and responsible use of animals in research under best welfare practice according to UK law and is a signatory of the Concordat on Openness in Animal Research in the UK.

2.2 Animals are used in research at RRes to advance our knowledge and understanding of grazing livestock (ovine and bovine) systems, to improve nutrient use efficiency in such systems and to optimise agricultural sustainability. A strategic aim of RRes is to develop grazing systems which will maximise the flow of nutrients from soil through to animal product and minimise pollution to the atmosphere (N_20, CH_4, NH_3 and CO_2) and to water courses.

2.2. The use of animals in research and testing is strictly regulated under the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 (ASPA). ASPA is implemented by the Home Office in England, Scotland, and Wales. Research involving animals at RRes is carried out under three licence types and according to ASPA conditions:

- a personal licence for each person carrying out regulated procedures on animals (PIL).
- a project licence for the programme of work (PPL).
- an establishment licence for RRes North Wyke where the work is carried out, designating the areas where regulated procedures can take place (PEL).

3 Scope

3.1 This policy applies to anyone using animals for scientific research at the North Wyke site under the RRes establishment licence.

3.2 A procedure is regulated if it is carried out on a protected animal for a scientific or educational purpose and may cause that animal a level of pain, suffering, distress, or lasting harm equivalent to, or higher than, that caused by inserting a hypodermic needle according to good veterinary practice.

3.3 This scope of this policy does not cover any procedures carried out on animals for veterinary purposes or any routine agricultural management.

4 Principles

4.1 RRes is a signatory of the Concordat on Openness in Animal Research in the UK. Through the Concordat, we have made four commitments:

- We will be clear about when, how, and why we use animals in research.
- We will enhance our communications with the media and the public about our research using animals.
- We will be proactive in providing opportunities for the public to find out about research using animals.
- We will report on progress annually and share our experiences.

4.2 RRes supports the principles of the 3Rs - Replacement, Reduction and Refinement in animal research and we are working with the wider scientific community to continue progressing the 3Rs

4.3 Any research protocols using animals will be reviewed by both the Project License Holder, the NACWO (Named Animal Care and Welfare Officer) and a statistician before they can start.

4.4 All Project licence (PPL) applications will be assessed and approved by the Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Body (AWERB) before an application for the license is submitted to the Home Office.

4.5 A statement on this policy will be published on the RRes public facing website in accordance with the institutes commitments as a signatory of the Concordat on Openness in Animal Research in the UK.

5 Roles and responsibilities

5.1 RRes will maintain an AWERB which will meet on a minimum of two (2) occasions per year to:

- Provide advice to staff on welfare of animals relating to their acquisition, care, and use.
- Advise on the application of the 3Rs;
- Advise the establishment licence holder whether to support project proposals from a local perspective, bringing local knowledge and expertise to bear on the harms and benefits and practical, scientific and ethical issues;
- Establish and review management and operational processes for monitoring, reporting and follow up in relation to animal welfare.

5.2 In accordance with ASPA, the RRes Institute Executive Team (IET) will ensure that a **Named Person Responsible for Compliance (NPRC)** is appointed and named on the RRes establishment license. It is the responsibility of the NPRC to ensure that the requirements of ASPA and the conditions of the establishment licence are complied with.

The NPRC will ensure that the following roles are in place and that the individuals are identified on the establishment Licence:

5.2.1 **Named Person Responsible for Compliance (NPRC):** to ensure that the requirements of ASPA and the conditions of the establishment licence are complied with (this will usually be the Establishment Licence holder).

5.2.2 **Named Veterinary Surgeon (NVS):** a designated veterinarian with expertise in relevant experimental animal medicine, charged with advisory duties in relation to the well-being and treatment of the animals. Exceptionally, a suitably qualified expert may be appointed where more appropriate.

5.2.3 **Named Animal Care & Welfare Officer (NACWO):** responsible for overseeing the welfare and care of the animals in the establishment.

5.2.4 **Named Training and Competency Officer (NTCO):** responsible for ensuring that staff are adequately educated, competent and continuously trained and that they are supervised until they have demonstrated the requisite competency.

5.2.5 **Named Information Officer (NIO):** to ensure that staff dealing with animals have access to information specific to the species housed in the establishment.

PIL and PPL Holders

5.3 It is the responsibility of individual PIL and PPL holders to comply with the standard conditions of their licenses.

5.4 Any non-compliances will be reported by the relevant PPL holder to the Home Office in accordance with PPL standard condition 18.

6 Training requirements

6.1 RRes will provide the necessary training and guidance to all staff involved in animal research. This includes background to the law and ethics (E1 & L), specific PIL A & B for prospective personal licence holders and PPL training for prospective project licence holders.

7 Monitoring

7.1 The policy will be reviewed formally every 3 years or earlier if required by legislation.

8 Related Policies and Procedures

8.1 There are no related policies or procedures