



DEFINITION OF ANIMAL

(If it has a spinal cord, it requires IACUC protocol)

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 (OLAW/NIH) Definition: "Any live, vertebrate animal used or intended for use in research, research training, experimentation, or biological testing, or for related purposes." This includes birds, rats, mice as well as reptiles, amphibians and fish.

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 (and thus requires an approved animal protocol prior to beginning any research).

- 1) If your project involves any **live** vertebrate animal, you must have an approved IACUC animal use protocol before any activities can occur. In the animal protocol, you must assign a Pain/Distress Category to all procedures in which live vertebrate animals will be used.
- 2) If your project involves a "USDA covered species" (e.g. hamster, rabbit, swine or other higher mammal) you must have an approved IACUC animal use protocol to work with either **live or dead** animals (or parts of animals).
- 3) The IACUC does not consider embryos or fetuses live animals.
 - Birds and amphibians are considered animals only 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.
 - Rats or mice are only considered animals after birth
- 4) Invertebrates are EXEMPT from all federal regulations and you do need an animal protocol to work with invertebrate species.