

## UC Davis Office of the Attending Veterinarian Standards of Care

Policy: SC-33-300  
Date: 6/15/15  
Enabled by: The Guide,  
The Ag Guide  
AWA, PPM  
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### Title: Husbandry and Handling of Horses

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I. Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to outline the minimum standards of care for horses.

II. Policy:

All units providing care for horses must meet or exceed these minimum requirements, which are based on the *Guide for the Care and Use of Agricultural Animals in Research and Teaching* (the Ag Guide). Horses used in biomedical research and non-standard Ag practice teaching must additionally meet the requirements in the Animal Welfare Act and the *Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals*, current edition.

III. Procedure:

Daily:

**(365 days a year without exception)**

Observe each animal and check for health concerns, which must be documented with the date. Record sick and dead animals. Certain injuries or herd health concerns may be treated by facility managers per facility SOPs and do not need to be reported to a veterinarian. Consult with a clinical veterinarian for other health concerns or if potential herd health issues are observed.

Check feed- animals should be fed daily an amount that takes into consideration the nutrient density of the feed and the nutrient requirements of the animal. Horses housed inside or where they cannot graze should be fed at least twice a day. Salt should be available to horses on pasture, especially if the sodium content in the grasses and legumes of the pasture is insufficient to meet the horse's requirement. Exceptions to daily feeding must be approved in animal care and use protocols. Expiration dates for bagged feed must be readily available Campus Standard of Care on Food Storage. If a manufacturer's mill date is not available, indicate date received. Monitor feed containers and remove contaminants or spoiled feed.

Check water- sufficient clean water must be available in a consistent manner to meet the animal's daily needs under all environmental conditions. Automatic watering devices should be inspected to be certain that they are operating properly and are free of foreign material. Water troughs should be cleaned as needed to prevent algae or dirt from accumulating.

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### Weekly for Range Horses:

Observe range horses for health concerns at least weekly, observation must be documented with the date and initials of the observer. Record sick and dead range animals. Certain injuries or herd health concerns may be treated by facility managers per facility SOPs and do not need to be reported to a veterinarian. Consult with a clinical veterinarian for other health concerns or if potential herd health issues are observed.

### Enclosures:

Enclosures must be in good condition and free of damage that may cause injury. Dimensions of indoor enclosures should be sufficient to allow horses to make normal postural adjustments at will, including lying down in sternal or lateral recumbence. Solid interior stall walls are suggested for housing stallions to prevent aggression toward horses in adjacent stalls.

If trees or geographic features do not provide enough protection, artificial shelters and (or) windbreaks or sunshades should be provided. Shelters should provide protection from the elements.

Fencing height for horses needs to be at least 4.5ft tall.

Refer to Table 8-1 of the Ag Guide for specific space recommendations.

<http://www.fass.org/docs/agguide3rd/Chapter08.pdf>

Social housing should be considered the default for housing animals according to the IACUC policy on Social Housing of Social Species.

Enclosures need to be cleaned according to the SC 50-104 policy regarding Cleaning and Disinfecting Stalls, Runs and Enclosures for Large/Agricultural Animals

### Handling and Transport:

Teaching and research horses can be handled using halters and lead ropes. Extra control may be achieved by using the chain of a lead shank placed over the bridge of the horse's nose if needed.

Horses should only be tied to a solid and secure object using a quick release knot or panic snap.

Trailer interiors should be free of sharp edges and flooring should be non slip, such as rubber mats.

Refer to Table 5-4 of the Ag Guide for specific trailer space recommendations.

<http://www.fass.org/docs/agguide3rd/Chapter05.pdf>