

## APHIS Animal Care Stakeholder Update on Revised Policies 3 and 17

The Animal Care (AC) program within the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) continuously evaluates its program and policies in an effort to improve all facets of its operations. Through these initiatives, the AC program has enhanced the way the program carries out its responsibilities under the Animal Welfare Act (AWA). As part of this overall effort, AC recently revised two of its policies; one on veterinary care and the other regarding the annual report for research facilities.

### Policy #3 Revision

An information sheet on "Declawing and Tooth Removal" in wild or exotic carnivores or nonhuman primates is now available on the Animal Care publications Web site ([http://www.aphis.usda.gov/ac/publications/declaw\\_tooth.pdf](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/ac/publications/declaw_tooth.pdf)). This notice was developed in conjunction with revisions to Policy #3, and in accordance with the American Veterinary Medical Association position statements on "Removal or Reduction of Canine Teeth in Captive Nonhuman Primates or Exotic and Wild (Indigenous) Carnivores" and "Declawing Captive Exotic and Wild (Indigenous) Cats."

Policy #3 "Veterinary Care" has been revised to include a section stating that these procedures are not to be used in wild or exotic carnivores or nonhuman primates for purposes other than the immediate medical need of the animal, or under scientific research approved by an Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee. These procedures can cause pain, discomfort or other pathological conditions and are not considered to be appropriate methods of veterinary care.

### Policy #17 Revision

Under the Animal Welfare Act, research facilities are required to submit an annual report on animals used for research, experiments, tests, or teaching purposes. AC has revised Policy #17 "Annual Report for Research Facilities" to emphasize the need to provide data that is true, correct, and complete. AC has also updated information on the process used to distribute the annual report form packages, provided additional clarification to instructions for completing the APHIS forms, and outlined the optional procedure for submitting the report electronically.

To learn more about these policies and the activities that AC regulates, please visit our Web site at <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/ac>. To add or remove a name from this update, please send an email to: [ac.stakeholder.update@aphis.usda.gov](mailto:ac.stakeholder.update@aphis.usda.gov). Suggestions for future updates are encouraged and can be sent to the same address.

Sincerely,



Chester Gipson, DVM  
Deputy Administrator