LAB_004 Packing Rodents for Issue and Export (Expires November 2027)

I. OBJECTIVE

To describe the standard procedures to pack rodents for Issue and Export used across UQ research projects, also reflecting the procedure used to train workers across UQ within UQBR.

NB: The use of (*) indicates this statement is dependent on the facility procedures.
NB: The use of (**) indicates this statement is dependent on AEC Approvals.

II. SAFETY

1. PPE use is essential when handling laboratory rodents.
2. All accidents, injury or near misses are to be reported immediately to the Facility Manager and recorded on a UQ OHS Incident Report Form

III. EQUIPMENT

Equipment Items

- Appropriate transport container
- Neonate transport container
- Automatic strapping machine (*)
- Packing Tape

Consumables

- PPE (*)
- Disinfectant (*)
- Paper towel
- Feed
- Non-wetting nutrition gel pack e.g. HydroGel®
- Bedding material e.g. Sanichip®
- Nesting Material e.g. Envirodry®
- UQBR Identification Chart

Administration

- Sharpie
- Pen
- Room diary (*)
- Movement Sheet (*)
- Animal Management Database
- Daily UQBR Animals Order List for all orders exiting UQBR facilities orders (non-ARC)
- Transport Labels
    - Animals in Labs Labels
    - Internal Labels

- National Labels
- International Labels

IV. PREPARATION OF EQUIPMENT

Preparation of Transport Containers

1. Transport Containers should be cleaned and/or autoclaved prior to use.
    - Ensure the filters are intact without signs of wear.
    - Ensure dividers are straight and fit within the transport container appropriately.
2. All transport containers should have the following consumables included:
    - Bedding material e.g. Sanichip®, where possible including soiled dirty bedding from home cage to provide familiar smells and minimise transportation stress.
    - Feed - usually scattered on the shipper floor, the volume is proportional to the distance to be travelled and number of animals i.e. short distance will require less food (small handful), longer distance and overnight will require more food (2 handfuls).
    - Nesting Material e.g. Envirodry®
    - Hydration non-wetting nutrition gel pack e.g. HydroGel® proportional to the distance and number of animals. Placed on the shipper floor and kept within the plastic casing to avoid absorption into bedding. When using a whole gel pack one end is cut to provide animal access. If using a portion of a gel pack the cut end will allow access.
3. Ensure enough food and hydration is provided for several days in case of delay.
4. Attach UQBR shipping label or relevant transport label to each box.
5. Apply GMO sticker where required. Note this is an OGTR requirement.
6. Attach other documentation within sleeve on the outside of the transport box.
7. Maximum stocking densities in UQBR-OM-01 husbandry of rodents across UQBR must be followed.

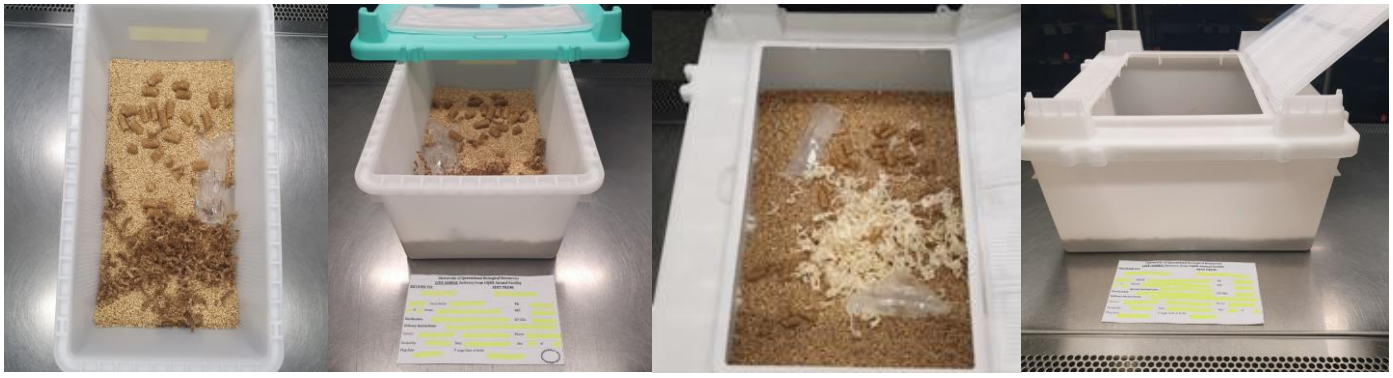

Figure 1. Contents of a standard transport container (UQBR 2020)

V. PROCEDURE

Packing by Research Workers

1. Where the UQBR facility allows, research workers may pack and transfer animals to
   a. Other UQBR facilities with prior Facility Manager approval
   b. UQBR Laboratories following remove animals from UQBR facilities.
2. Steps outlined in the below procedure *Packing for Issue – Internal (Between UQBR Facilities)* will be followed to pack animals including:
   a. Labelling the transport container using local templates provided with all fields correctly completed.
   b. Use of GMO stickers where required.
   c. Local record keeping must be followed i.e. use of movement sheet or direct updating of Mosaic database to record animal transfer.

Packing by Research Workers – To UQ approved Laboratory (Guideline 4.20.11)

1. Ensure the Animal management database (Mosaic) has a Colony ID created prior to transport, this is unique for each strain and location of animals.
2. Pack animals as below procedure *Packing by UQBR for Issue – Internal and Domestic Transport*
   a. Example movement sheet record when transferring to a laboratory.

Date	Name mice held under/Lab	Strain	Activity (e.g. cull, To Lab) (Building, room and colony)	# of animals	Box/ID number	Sex	DOB	AEC #
29/07/16	Amy East/ Smith lab	BALB/C	To Lab MacGregor Rm 999 COL9999	5	#5 - 10	F	1/5/16	999/15

Figure 1 Example movement sheet entry.

3. Complete tracking label available in a central location and affix to transport container. One label per box of animals is required and must remain on the transport container until unpacking or ~~or~~ euthanasia. Ensure all sections are completed.

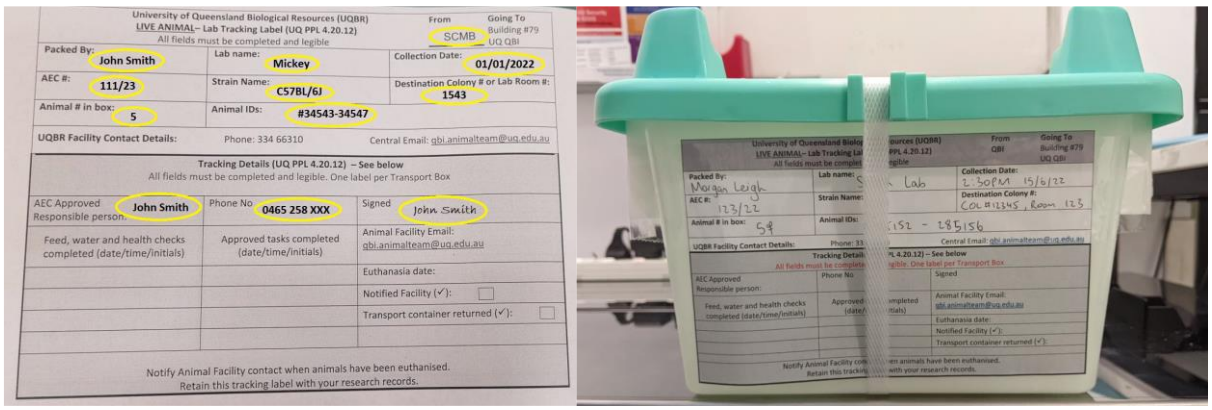

Figure 2 Example tracking label completion and placement.

Packing by UQBR for Issue – Internal (between UQBR Facilities) and Domestic Transport

1. Time sensitive orders are prioritised to ensure prompt packing and delivery that is required. In addition, follow facility hierarchy for packing animals in the correct order.

2. Ensure you have identified the correct animals for packing as per order request. Communicate identified discrepancies with the researcher.
    - Ensure animals are fit for purpose (for example malocclusions or reproductive health) and have no abnormal health concerns.
    - Correct strain, sex, age, weight, ID pregnancy status, genotype
    - Ensure the below rules are followed:
        - Male mice older than 5 weeks of age must not be combined from different home cages to avoid fighting and injury during transportation.
        - Adult male rats can be combined unless they have been previously mated.
        - Dividers are used to create compartments where animals cannot be pooled together.

3. Place rodents in the transport container, take care to avoid accidental entrapment from the lid and dividers. Transport containers are not left with the lid off during the packing process.
   Follow the requirements for stocking densities allowable within transport containers as below.

Cage Style Name: Transport Box Small Species: Rats & Mice Inside Floor Dimensions: 200 x 365 x 140 = 730 cm² Recommended capacity (undivided): 12 mice <30g 5 rats <150g 3 rats <350g 2 rats <550g 	**Cage Style Name: Transport Box Large** Species: Rats & Mice Inside Floor Dimensions: 485 x 350 x 170 = 1698 cm² Recommended capacity (undivided): 28 mice <30g 11 rats <150g 7 rats <350g 5 rats <550g 2 rats > 550g 

4. Secure lid onto the transport container, the person packing the order will initial the label and indicate the box number from the total box number i.e. Box 2 of 4.
   Ensure each corner of the lid has clicked into place.

5. Lock the moveable window on the lid into place (if there is a window)

6. Secure the lid by using tape around the container or using the automatic strapping machine*
   The tape should be secure and ensures if the transport container accidentally is dropped the risk of the lid opening is low.

7. Update documentation:
    - Animal Management Database
    - Room diaries
    - Movement sheets
    - If a national export, updated shipment documents
    - If internal transfer attach cage card with tracking label

   It is a compliance requirement for OGTR, The Code and UQ AEC that the movements of all research animals are documented and accurate.

8. Place the packaged transport container in facility approved area for collection.

This space should be in a low traffic area, with minimal noise and well-ventilated e.g. away from gas cylinders to avoid unnecessary stressors.

9. Follow your facilities procedure to ensure all animals placed in the holding area have been collected.
This will ensure animals have all been collected by the agreed timeframes and to avoid animal welfare concerns. Animals that are not collected within agreed timeframes may be unpacked and will need to be re-ordered.

Figure 3. placement of the label at the correct location (UQBR 2020).

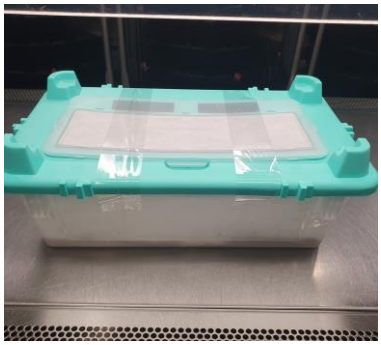

Figure 4. Placement of tape at two locations if taping closed (UQBR 2020).

Figure 5. Placement of strapping if using automatic strapping machine.

Packing for Issue – International Transport

1. UQBR Exports Officer will book the UQBR Veterinarian at the agreed date and time for the animals to receive a health inspection and send the final version of shipping documentation prior to export.
   This is a requirement for international transport. Required documentation will depend on where the animals are being shipped to and the varied requirements of the importing countries.

2. The forms will be printed on a UQ letterhead and one applied to each box. The UQBR Veterinarian will sign each form. *This is a requirement for international IATA transport.*

3. Pack as per Transport instructions above and according to IATA regulations, packing must be supervised by the UQBR Veterinarian.

4. Attach UQBR export shipping label to each box.

Packing for Issue - Neonates

Note: A pre-arranged collection time should be arranged to avoid prolonged separation from the mother

1. Prepare approved transport container with nesting material used for neonates.
2. Ensure you have identified the correct animals for packing.
3. Place neonate/s inside a pup container and secure lid with tape.
4. Place pup container into a transport container and secure to the bottom of the transport container.
5. Lock the transport container lid into place.
6. Update specific shipment documentation.
7. Place packaged transport container in facility approved area for collection.

   Neonates are placed on a heat source while awaiting collection.

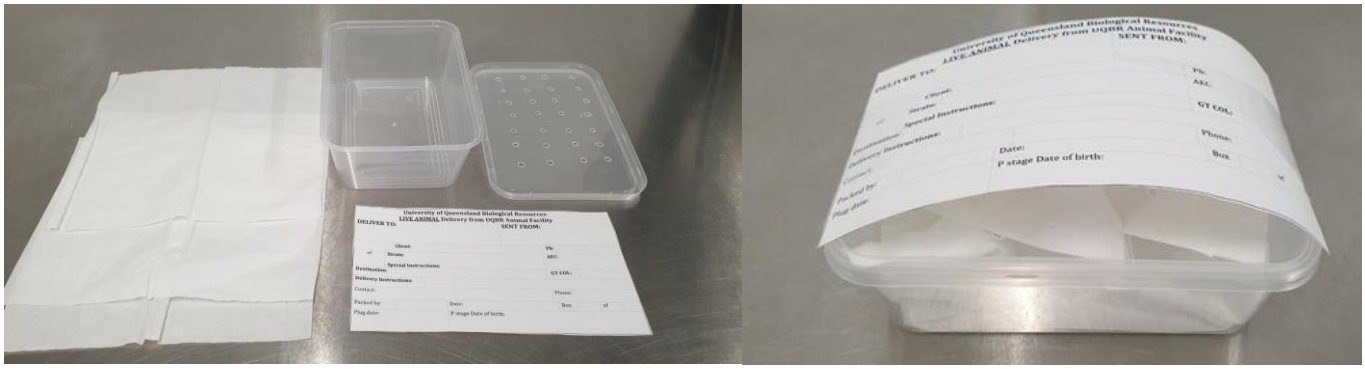

Figure 6. Contents of a stanard neonate transport container and placement of label.

VI. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Version #	Reviewing AEC (note: all other relevant AECs ratify the approval)	AEC Review Date	Approval To Date
[#]		[DD/MM/YYYY]	

Conditions:

- Investigators named in an animal ethics application, relative to this SOP, must be competent to implement the SOP
- Any variation to this SOP must be described in the relevant animal ethics application
- If this SOP has not been reviewed and approved by a UQ AEC within the last three years it is no longer valid and cannot be used in animal ethics applications until reapproved (see "AEC Reviewed/Approved" date in this document's header).