



TITLE: Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee Policy on the Use of Terrestrial Vertebrate Embryos

PURPOSE: To establish that projects utilizing unhatched terrestrial vertebrate embryos at or after 80% of mean incubation period, require Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) approval.

For chickens, the last 3 days of incubation (incubation days 18 to 21) represent the last stage of embryo development and coincide with the chick drawing the yolk sac into the body and having sufficient pulmonary maturation to handle oxygen and carbon dioxide exchange. During this period of time, some chicks may hatch normally and some prematurely hatched chicks could survive outside of the egg with little additional care, thus they will be considered vertebrate animals after Day 18 of incubation and will require IACUC protocol review.

REVIEW/REVISIONS: Permanent amendment/revisions to this policy must be presented to the IACUC for review before implementation and should be developed by the IACUC membership and/or University Animal Care Veterinary personnel.

EFFECTIVE DATE: 11/06/2008

PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE: Principal Investigators, IACUC Membership and Staff

POLICY/PROCEDURES:

The University of Arizona IACUC has adopted the following guidelines for avian embryos. The guidelines specifically address chicken embryos and can be adjusted for other avian species according to hatching time.

1. Investigators using avian embryos should inform the IACUC using the sample form (below) or in a written document that contains the same information.
2. If embryos will be used for research purposes before 80% incubation period (e.g. Day 18 of incubation), the research will not be subject to IACUC review, unless specifically requested by the investigator.
3. Unused chicken embryos can be killed by hypothermia (typically by placing the eggs in a -20^o C freezer).
4. The IACUC recognizes that inadvertent hatching may occur. In such rare cases, American Veterinary Medical Association approved euthanasia methods must be used. Investigators are asked to describe their method for humane euthanasia of inadvertent hatchlings.

JUSTIFICATION:

It is noted that the US Department of Agriculture Animal Welfare Act and Public Health Service Policy require coverage of protocols utilizing live vertebrate animals.

While embryonal stages of avian species develop vertebrae at a stage in their development prior to hatching, Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare has interpreted 'live vertebrate animals' to apply to avians (e.g. chick embryos) only after hatching. As interpreted, avian embryos are not covered by federal regulations. However, if a terrestrial vertebrate egg hatches intentionally or unintentionally they are subject to oversight by the IACUC.



Notification of Use of Avian Embryos

Contact Information

PI Name	Department	E-Mail	Phone

Summary of Proposed Use (hit TAB when in the bottom right cell to add additional lines)

Avian Species	Age(s) of Embryos	Method of Disposing of Unused Embryos (e.g. Freezing in the shell overnight @ -20° C)	Method of Euthanasia in Cases of Inadvertent Hatching	Location of Embryo Use

PI Signature & Date