



Animal Program Policy

Title: Environmental Enrichment
Date Created: 5/11/2012
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Animals housed in the Forsyth Animal Facility are kept in a clean and safe environment. However, the laboratory environment is not as diverse as encountered in the wild: environmental enrichment seeks to enrich the animals' lives by providing items for play and housing that more closely mimic their natural environment and provide for appropriate species-specific behavior.

Forsyth's IACUC policy is that environmental enrichment shall be provided to all animals, unless a protocol specifically prohibits specific forms of enrichment. The enrichment provided may be updated from time to time as new information and additional items become available.

Co-housing: All species currently housed at Forsyth (may include mice, rats, rabbits, hamsters and guinea pigs) are social species and must be co-housed whenever possible. Single housing must be justified in the protocol.

Standard enrichment provided in the Forsyth Animal Facility is as follows:

Species	Standard Enrichment Items	Supplemental Enrichment Items
Mouse	Nestlets; igloos OR rectangular huts OR tunnels	Egg cartons, Enviro-Dri
Rats	Rectangular huts, nylabones, Enviro-Dri	Nestlets, egg cartons, Shepherd shacks
Rabbits	Nylabones, balls, timothy hay, human interaction	Exercise periods outside of the cage
Hamsters	PVC tubes	Nestlets
Guinea Pigs	PVC tubes, feeder cups	

Supplemental enrichment items are not provided in all cases, but are available upon request. Investigators should discuss changes to enrichment with the Director of Animal Care, and these changes should be detailed in the appropriate protocols. In addition, no changes to the standard enrichment will be made by animal care staff without first consulting the PI or his/her representative.