



Inspection Report

BERTEK INC.
P O BOX 606
GREENBRIER, AR 72058

Customer ID: **25517**
Certificate: **71-R-0107**
Site: 001
BERTEK, INC.

Type: ROUTINE INSPECTION
Date: 24-AUG-2022

2.31(d)(5)

Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC).

In 2006, the IACUC had approved alternative housing for rabbits being actively used for tick-rearing. The IACUC approved enclosures no smaller than 2.5 sqft for rabbits greater than 2kg. However, since 2006 the IACUC has not conducted any reviews of this approval, even though members of the IACUC have changed. Additionally, rabbits were currently being housed in smaller enclosures during tick-rearing. Without regular review, policies can become outdated and the IACUC members unfamiliar with all activities occurring at the facility. All animal activities must be reviewed by the IACUC no less than every 3 years. Correct at next IACUC meeting by September 2022.

2.31(e)

Critical

Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC).

The facility has established an SOP for tick-rearing in rabbits and flea-rearing in cats. The SOPs, as written, have been reviewed and approved by the IACUC. However, the SOPs do not contain all of the information required of proposals to conduct activities involving animals: 1, species are identified but approximate number of animals needed is not; 2, the rationale for using animals and the appropriateness of the species and numbers needed is not explained; 3, A description of how the animals will be used is provided but is not complete; 4, no methods to limit the discomfort or pain of the animals or scientific justifications for unavoidable and untreatable pain/discomfort are provided; 5, methods or reasons for

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euthanasia are not included. All proposals for activities involving animals must contain the above 5 pieces of information in order to be adequately evaluated by the IACUC for animal welfare concerns. The welfare concerns identified in the rabbits at this inspection and cited on this record indicate that the IACUC has been unable to properly evaluate how the proposed activities impact their welfare. This must be corrected and approved by the IACUC before continued use of animals in these insufficient SOPs/protocols.

2.36(b)(7)

Annual report.

The 2021 annual report listed 390 rabbits in category C: research conducted involving no pain, distress, or pain-relieving drugs. These animals are used for rearing large numbers of larval ticks. The rabbits are housed for 5-6 days in smaller, warmer enclosures, while wearing an e-collar to minimize their activity level and prevent them from grooming or dislodging the feeding ticks. The rabbits develop welts from the ticks that last 24 hours after removal of the engorged ticks, indicating significant irritation. No pain management or other measures are provided to the rabbits alleviate the discomfort caused by the feeding ticks. Animals used in research procedures where pain and distress may occur, and where no methods to alleviate pain may be used, must be reported on the annual report in Category E with an additional attachment explaining the procedures that produce distress and the reasons why pain alleviating measures are not possible. The animals from this protocol should have been reported in Category E with an explanatory attachment. Accurate reporting of animals used in research is required to ensure proper oversight and disclosure of animal usage. Correct by reporting animals in the correct animal use category on the current and future annual reports.

3.51(b)

Facilities, indoor.

Rabbits used in tick-rearing are housed in a modified incubator, which leads to elevated temperatures within the enclosures. At the time of the inspections, an IR gun was used to measure the temperature in at least one incubator

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housing a rabbit and it was found to be 87.5 degrees Fahrenheit. No additional ventilation was being used to provide for the comfort of the rabbit. As a fur-bearing species, rabbits are more susceptible to heat stress and can become ill. Correct by September 30, 2022 by providing auxiliary ventilation to the rabbits if their housing results in elevated temperatures.

3.53(c)(2)

Primary enclosures.

In the tick-rearing room, 5 rabbits were housed for 5-6 days in individual tick-rearing cages that were 13" x 22", providing only 1.986 sqft of space. The rabbits weighed 2.2kg, 2.3kg, 2.4kg, 2.6kg, and 3kg, necessitating 3 sqft of space per rabbit. If enclosures are too small, normal movement is restricted and rabbits are at risk of injuring themselves and becoming stressed from close confinement. Correct by September 7, 2022 by ensuring rabbits have adequate volume of space to allow for normal postural adjustment.

This inspection and exit interview were conducted with the Institutional Official.

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Species Inspected

Cust No	Cert No	Site	Site Name	Inspection
25517	71-R-0107	001	BERTEK, INC.	24-AUG-2022

Count	Scientific Name	Common Name
000312	<i>Canis lupus familiaris</i>	DOG ADULT
000017	<i>Felis silvestris catus</i>	CAT ADULT
000063	<i>Oryctolagus cuniculus</i>	DOMESTIC RABBIT / EUROPEAN RABBIT
000392	Total	