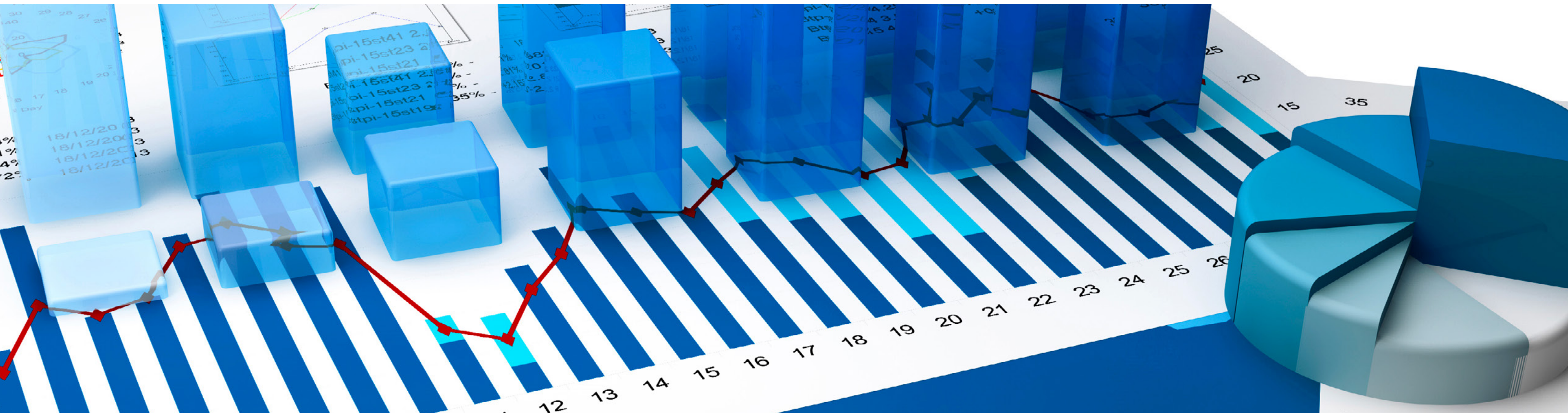

CCAC
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INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETION OF THE CCAC ANIMAL USE DATA FORM

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INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETION OF THE CCAC ANIMAL USE DATA FORM

DATE OF REVISION: January 2026
EFFECTIVE DATE: January 2030

This version of the *Instructions for Completion of the CCAC Animal Use Data Form* pertains to the CCAC's new animal use data collection system that comes into effect on January 1, 2030.

Until then, institutions must continue to submit their data according to the 2023 version of the instructions, and notably, must categorize their protocols using the CCAC's categories of invasiveness for animal experiments and not the new categories of welfare impact.

1. PREAMBLE

The institutions certified by the Canadian Council on Animal Care's (CCAC) are at the heart of advancing ethical animal care and use in Canadian science, and the publication of national animal use data is a valuable tool to support that work. By contributing to this data, institutions help build a clearer understanding of how and why animals are used, support the application of the Three Rs, and inform better policies, guidelines, and research methods nationwide.

The CCAC's new animal use data system represents a significant step toward aligning Canada with the data collection practices of other research-intensive countries. Rooted in the CCAC's ethical principles, which recognize the cumulative lifetime experiences of animals, this updated system draws on information already included in institutional animal use protocols to provide a more complete picture of animal use in Canadian science.

This improved approach will help institutions identify trends, gaps, and areas for improvement, making animal care and use programs more responsive, efficient, and aligned with ethical practices. The collected data will also inform program management decisions and provide valuable insight into how and where the Three Rs can be more effectively applied. This leads to better animal welfare outcomes and contributes to more rigorous, reproducible, and translatable scientific outcomes. Finally, the publication of national animal use data is an important element of transparency and accountability, and demonstrates that Canada is committed to responsible oversight, continual improvement, and the advancement of ethical scientific practices.

At the national level, the CCAC will utilize this information to revise and develop more relevant guidelines and policies that reflect the current needs and realities of program participants, and to support more focused and informed assessment visits.

Together, CCAC-certified institutions can strengthen animal care and use programs across Canada, fostering a more transparent, accountable system grounded in ethical, responsible science.

2. INTRODUCTION

The CCAC has been publishing national data of animal use in science since 1975, and these reports are available for the previous five years on the CCAC website and older reports are available upon request.

This document aims to provide information and assistance to CCAC program participants in filling out the new animal use data form (AUDF).

The CCAC's animal use data form enables the CCAC to collect information on animal use in science. The CCAC uses the information from the animal use data form to prepare the annual animal use data reports, which present national aggregate information on the number of animals used, the purpose of animal use, the category of welfare impact (formerly category of invasiveness) to the animals, and several other variables.

Every year, CCAC-certified institutions are required to submit their animal use data for the previous calendar year before March 31 to audf@ccac.ca, as stated in Section 5c of the *CCAC policy statement on: terms of reference for animal care committees* (CCAC, 2006). This submission must be done using the CCAC AUDF MS Excel template provided on the CCAC website.

The CCAC reviews the institutional animal use data submissions to ensure that the composite data is as accurate as possible. If there are questions concerning missing data or inconsistencies, the institution will be contacted to provide additional information. A prompt response is appreciated as it assists the CCAC in publishing the animal use data in a timely manner.

3. ANIMALS INCLUDED IN THE ANIMAL USE DATA FORM

All animals used on an animal use protocol mandated by the CCAC must be included within the animal use data form (see *Requirement for submitting an animal protocol: Addendum to the CCAC policy statement on terms of reference for animal care committees* (CCAC, 2020) for a full clarification of requirements).

Data for animals that have reached the following developmental stages must be reported to the CCAC:

- **altricial rodents**: animals that have been weaned, unless they are used for science, genotyped, or culled prior to weaning (in which case data must be reported for these animals)
- **other mammals**: born (either naturally or cesarian derived), provided they are breathing
- **birds and reptiles**: hatched, provided they are breathing
- **fish**: animals that are capable of independent feeding (regardless of the state of the yolk sac)
- **amphibians**: tadpoles that are capable of independent feeding

4. ANIMALS NOT TO BE INCLUDED ON THE AUDF

The *Requirement for submitting an animal protocol: Addendum to the CCAC policy statement on terms of reference for animal care committees* (CCAC, 2020) describes when an animal use protocol is not required. If animals are not included on an animal use protocol or an animal use protocol renewal form, they must not be reported.

5. RETROSPECTIVE REPORTING

Animal data for all animals must be submitted to the CCAC on an annual basis. Animal data must be reported to the CCAC only for the calendar year in which a protocol ends or is renewed (e.g., a protocol that starts in November 2031 and continues for six months would not be counted for the 2031 reporting year, but in 2032).

This change avoids animals being double counted across years if a single protocol spans two calendar years and provides clarity on the number of new animals brought in, and the total number of animals used, each year.

Retrospective reporting should reduce the burden on institutions to collate data at the end of the calendar year and remove the requirement for protocols to be tracked across multiple calendar years. Doing so should increase accuracy and consistency between institutions and improve data quality.

6. COLLABORATIONS

Descriptions of different types of collaborations are provided in the *CCAC policy on: Animal-based projects involving two or more institutions* (CCAC, 2003). Specific information regarding the expectations for reporting animal data in these instances is described in the *CCAC frequently asked questions: Animal-based projects involving two or more institutions* (CCAC, 2020).

For such cross-institutional collaborations, every animal should be counted, but only once. When all collaborating institutions are CCAC-certified, the institution where the animals reside should report those numbers to the CCAC. Should that not be possible, a section on the animal use protocol submitted to each animal care committee should identify clearly which institution will be responsible for reporting.

When only one of the collaborating institutions is CCAC certified (e.g., in the case of international or industry partnerships), the certified institution is responsible for reporting animal numbers, regardless of where the animals are kept.

7. REQUIRED ELEMENTS

The following fields must be completed on the animal use data form:

a) unique protocol number

b) animal genus and species

c) animal type
d) total number of animals used
e) species at risk
f) source of animals
g) animals' place of residence at the time of use
h) location of scientific activity
i) outcomes for animals
j) category of welfare impact
k) purpose of animal use

7A. Unique Protocol Number

CCAC-certified institutions must attribute a unique number to each protocol that must be reported.

7B. Animal Genus and Species

All animals should be clearly identified by genus and species. If the species is unknown (e.g., in large-scale population sampling), then reporting only the genus is adequate. However, if the animals are covered by the *Species at Risk Act* (SARA), the genus and species must be reported.

When multiple species are used within a single protocol (e.g., small mammals in field studies) each species must be reported distinctly.

7C. Animal Type

All animals must be reported under one of the following animal type groups:

- eggs/embryos/invertebrates outside of CCAC's mandate*
- amphibians (including tadpoles)
- birds (other than poultry)
- cats
- cattle
- cephalopods
- dogs
- fish (except zebrafish and other small warm water fish)

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* Note that the CCAC does not want these animals reported on the AUDF. This option is here only to allow the CCAC to filter this information out in the event that it must be submitted due to limitations of software systems.

- gerbils
- goats
- guinea pigs
- hamsters
- horses
- marine mammals
- mice
- nonhuman primates
- pigs
- poultry (chickens, turkeys)
- rabbits
- rats
- reptiles
- sheep
- zebrafish and other small warm water fish
- other

7D. Total Number of Animals Used

The total number of animals used on each protocol (and further broken down by each unique genus and species as required) must be reported annually. This includes all animals produced or acquired for science that are of the required developmental stage, even if they are killed prior to any use in a scientific activity.

If the same animals are listed on more than one protocol within a calendar year, animal use data should be reported only once, under the final protocol of each year that they are used. This may happen if animals are transferred to another protocol within the same institution within one calendar year, if animals are used on several teaching protocols within one calendar year, or if animals are transferred to another protocol at a different institution within one calendar year.

7E. Species at Risk

Any scientific activities done with wild animals that are covered by SARA or equivalent in another country must be reported. The options to report this information are:

- **yes**: the animals are currently covered by SARA (or equivalent in another country)
- **no**: the animals are not currently covered by SARA (or equivalent in another country)

7F. Source of Animals

The options for reporting source of animals are:

- **purchased from a supplier of laboratory animals**: animals used for the first time for the purpose of science
- **produced in-house**: animals used for the first time for the purpose of science
- **owned/volunteered by a third-party**: animals that are not owned by a scientific institution and whose primary purpose is not to be used for science (e.g., commercial farm animals, privately-owned (including humane societies) companion animals, and zoo/aquarium animals)
- **purchased or otherwise obtained from non-scientific sources**: animals, which were not produced primarily for the purpose of science, that were purchased or otherwise acquired from somewhere other than a supplier of laboratory animals and subsequently owned by an institution (e.g., animals purchased from commercial farms or auctions, exotic animals purchased from pet stores, humane societies)
- **studied in the wild**: non-domesticated animals studied in the wild
- **captured in the wild and brought into captivity**: non-domesticated animals brought into captivity and used for the first time for the purpose of science
- **held over from a previous year (long-term use)**: animals that have been held in an institution for more than one year (either born in captivity for the purpose of science, captured from the wild, or otherwise procured), and where animal use data was reported to the CCAC in a previous year. Therefore, each year after the first year that an animal is used, it should be labelled with this category. However, this option must not be used for animals studied in the wild or for animals owned/volunteered by a third party. There is no expectation to track individual animals long-term in these situations. For these two sources, each animal must be classified as if they are being used for the first time, even if they may have been caught or used previously

7G. Animals' Place of Residence at the Time of Use

The options to report animals' place of residence are:

- **onsite**: animals were housed in captivity in a scientific setting (e.g., vivarium, laboratory, animal facility, university-owned animal hospital). CCAC-certified institutions are the primary caregivers for these animals. This applies to wild animals held for longer than 12 hours (e.g., in a research/field station)
- **offsite**: animals were held at an external, non-primarily scientific location. CCAC-certified institutions are not the primary caregiver for these animals. Examples include: commercial farms, private veterinary clinics, companion animals in a public park, zoos, and aquariums
- **in the wild**: animals were studied in the wild (including wild animals in urban environments) or were held in captivity for less than 12 hours

If individual animals had more than one place of residence (e.g., they were studied in the wild, then captured and brought into captivity for more than 12 hours), the option where they spent the most time as a subject of science should be selected.

7H. Location of Scientific Activity

The options to report location of scientific activity are:

- **international**: animals were used/studied outside of Canada
- **within Canada**: animals were used/studied within Canada

7I. Outcomes for Animals (Annually, at the Time of Protocol Renewal Or End)

The outcomes for animals category must be reported each year, capturing their current outcome at the time of protocol renewal, project end, or at the end of their scientific tenure.

The options for reporting outcomes for animals are:

- **mortality as a consequence of science**: animals were humanely killed as a direct consequence of being used in a scientific activity, as part of the scientific activity for data collection, as a food source for other animals used for science, as a sentinel animal, during quarantine, etc. If animals were humanely killed at the end of a protocol, but their tissues were then used for another project, they should be identified under this option. This category also includes animals that may have died during the scientific activity due to accidents or spontaneous illnesses. Animals of the wrong genotype should also be reported under this option
- **humanely killed after the completion of the scientific activity**: following their use in a scientific activity, these animals were humanely killed even though there was no scientific reason that they had to be. These animals did not have ongoing compromised welfare because of procedures they experienced, were not humanely killed for data collection, and were not genetically modified, but were humanely killed because there was no further intended use for them. These animals are potential candidates for reuse (e.g., in teaching activities) or rehoming
- **sold**: animals that were sold to a new owner (e.g., for commercial agricultural purposes or to another scientific institution)
- **returned to the wild/owner**: animals that were released back into the wild (whether held or studied in the field) or returned to their third-party owner (whether studied onsite or offsite)
- **rehomed**: animals that are moved to a non-scientific environment, such as a private residence, an animal sanctuary, or, in the case of farm animals, an agricultural farm, provided that the move is permitted by regulatory authorities and that institutions have assessed the potential for rehoming and the health of animals
- **kept for continued or future use**: animals that were kept for continued use in an ongoing protocol, or so that they can be use at a future date in another protocol

7J. Category of Welfare Impact

The category of welfare impact must be assigned based on the *CCAC guidelines: Categories of welfare impact* (CCAC, 2024). Importantly, the category of welfare impact must be confirmed retrospectively for every animal. These retrospective data are what must be reported to the CCAC. Any prospectively assigned categories must not be reported.

The categories of welfare impact are:

A – Positive welfare impact

B – Mild negative welfare impact

C – Moderate negative welfare impact

D – High negative welfare impact

E – Severe negative welfare impact

7K. Purpose of Animal Use

The purpose of animal use should be assigned according to the primary purpose of the scientific activity, on a per animal basis. Therefore, one protocol may have more than one purpose of animal use (e.g., when they contain a breeding portion and an experimental portion), but each individual animal can only be assigned a single purpose of animal use (the one that best applies as the primary use of the animal). If the primary purpose of animal use is not clear, the purpose of animal use corresponding to the portion of the scientific activity with the highest category of welfare impact should be chosen. Institutions should aim to be internally consistent in how they assign purpose of animal use across all their protocols.

The purpose of animal use categories are as follows:

1. **surplus animals produced or acquired, but not used for science:** most commonly, this will be animals that are the wrong genotype. This may also include situations when only a certain number of young animals are needed and a litter size exceeds that, or if only one sex of a litter is required. This does not include stillborn animals, which are not to be reported as they do not meet the developmental stage required criterion described in Section 3, "Animals Included in the Animal Use Data Form"

2. **animals used indirectly, including breeding/held animals:** animals held or used for breeding (brood stock), but not otherwise used directly for science. Animals that support science and are therefore used indirectly such as sentinels, teasers, and animals used for food, are included in this category

3. **fundamental science:** studies of a fundamental nature relating to essential structure or function in biology, ecology, psychology, biochemistry, pharmacology, physiology, etc.

   examples: studies designed to understand the cellular or molecular basis of basic physiological or biochemical reactions; studies designed to understand one or some of the various facets of the role played by a hormone or other compound produced by mammals; studies designed to better understand the behavior of various species (not for applied purposes)

4. **environmental science:** studies of human interaction with the environment, with the interest of solving complex problems involving animals and the natural environment, the urban environment, and the sets of relationships between them in ecology, biology, physics, chemistry, plant science, zoology, mineralogy, oceanography, limnology, soil science, geology and physical geography, etc.

   examples: studies designed to understand the natural environment and human society effects, including abating or controlling environmental pollution and degradation; studies designed to better understand the population dynamics of various species

5. **human medicine and well-being:** studies of disease states, treatments, and products primarily aimed at benefitting humans

   examples: studies of an applied or preclinical nature, including advancing understanding of specific disease processes, testing potential treatments, or developing products aimed at improving human health and well-being

6. **veterinary medicine and animal welfare:** studies of disease states, treatments, products, housing conditions, etc., primarily aimed at benefitting animals

   examples: studies aimed at advancing understanding of specific disease processes, testing potential treatments, or developing products aimed at improving animal health; studies designed to improve animal welfare through improved housing, husbandry, etc.; studies aimed at advancing the Three Rs

7. **food production:** studies aimed at the realization of sustainable, eco-friendly and safe agriculture and sustainable animal production, feed efficiency, meat quality, etc. The primary focus of these studies is on animal productivity and output quality, not on the animals themselves

   examples: studies looking into reducing boar taint in swine; studies purported to improve average daily gains in beef cattle

8. **regulatory testing:** studies required by government authorities for regulatory testing of products for the protection of humans, animals, or the environment

   examples: safety testing; regulatory toxicology; shellfish toxin testing; vaccine efficacy trials; testing of new therapeutic compounds (to generate data that is to be used in a submission for an investigational new drug application (IND) or for a new drug application (NDA))

9. **education:** teaching or training of individuals in post-secondary institutions or facility programs where animals are used to introduce students to scientific work and teach manual skills and techniques

   examples: animals used for classroom demonstrations/labs designed to impart knowledge of biological principles; hands-on practical activities with animals designed to teach skills in working with animals

10. **animal-based activities outside CCAC's mandate:** these activities are described in Section 4, "Animals Not to be Included on the AUDF" and in the *Requirement for submitting an animal protocol: Addendum to the CCAC policy statement on terms of reference for animal care committees* (CCAC, 2020). **Note that the CCAC does not want these animals reported on the AUDF**. This option is to allow the CCAC to filter this information out in the event that it must be submitted due to limitations of a software system

8. TERMINOLOGY

Animal use protocol – form mandated by the CCAC that describes the scientific animal use activity, and which must be approved by an animal care committee

CCAC animal use data report – national aggregate data that the CCAC publishes annually

Calendar year – January 1 to December 31

Institutional animal use data form – Excel report that each institution must send to the CCAC each year. This report must contain all of the required data elements from all of the scientific animal use on protocols that were renewed or ended within that calendar year. This is due to the CCAC before March 31 of the following calendar year

Required data elements – data points detailed in this document that must be filled out about the animals for each protocol and included on each institution's annual institutional animal use data report

Retrospective data collection window – period of time that data should be collected from the animals. This period is triggered when a protocol is renewed or ends and then works backwards from that point to either the beginning of the protocol, or the most recent renewal, whichever is closer. This period is up to 12 months long (the maximum time before an animal use protocol must be renewed). It may be less time when a protocol is shorter than 12 months in duration, or if the time between the protocol end and most recent renewal is less than 12 months. How each institution collects the required data elements from their scientific activities and manages the creation of their annual institutional animal use data report is up to them

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