

Policy and General Procedure: Automated Census by Bar Code Scanning

Animals that are acquired from a vendor, through quarantine, transfer from a colleague, or via in-house breeding are added to the census when the cage card bar code is scanned by DAR animal care technicians. This is done on the day of one of the aforementioned events and then continuously twice a week on a Monday and Thursday or Tuesday and Friday scheduled pair of scans.

To allow for efficient and accurate census, every enclosure (e.g. cage, pen) containing animals must have a valid barcode label. There are three kinds of cage cards that exist for this purpose: a) the traditional card printed in the DAR office for animals purchased from commercial vendors, b) an over-sized card that can be placed behind a non-conventional card preferred by a lab, and c) small adhesive labels that can be affixed to a lab-specific card. The former two can be ordered in from the DAR office. The adhesive labels can be printed by qualified DAR staff in each animal research facility and not uncommonly on the same day of a request. Because a card is not counted on the census until posted on an enclosure in an animal research facility and scanned, we encourage each lab to keep a reasonable excess inventory on hand in order to facilitate easy cage card management. This also entails, however, that these labels be discarded and replacements ordered when an IACUC protocol is renewed on or before the 3rd anniversary date.

Enclosures that do not have a valid barcode on the card will be identified and a "Needs Bar Code Label" form will be faxed to the investigator. The investigator will have until the next scheduled scan date to place a bar code on the card. If there is no bar code on the cage on the next scheduled scan day, DAR will place a bar code label on it and manually start census going back to the previous scan date. The current fee for this intervention can be found at: http://www.dar.emory.edu/admin_fees.htm.

Where research personnel seek to start census for weaned or separated animals, appropriate barcode labels should be used. Weaning cards should be used when weanlings are separated from their parents in new cages. Separation cards should be used when animals already on the census are divided into smaller groups in additional cages. Additional information presented in the way of FAQs can be found at: http://www.dar.emory.edu/admin_policy_animal_acq.htm. Barcodes can be obtained by submitting a "To Request Labels/Cage Cards" form to a facility supervisor. These forms are available in all facility supervisor offices. Census starts when the new labels are scanned on the scheduled scan date.

A particular cage or enclosure remains on census until the census is stopped when the animals are depopulated. This is accomplished in one of two ways. Where animals are terminated by research personnel, the cage card from the depopulated cage or enclosure must be placed in the weekday-specific pouch located at the facility manager's office entrance. This identical procedure is used when rodents are euthanized by the DAR staff. The facility manager or designated DAR staff will promptly scan these cards to stop the census. If the cage cards have valuable research information printed, there are alternatives to turning in the entire cards and our facility supervisors can coach on these options.

The second way in which census is terminated is when two consecutive scans are missed. This scenario would include where animals were terminated and the cage cards not scanned-out. To avoid this scenario and associated unnecessary *per diem* charges, it is consequently critical to put terminated cards in the designated pouch in a timely manner.