1. **PURPOSE**

This Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) describes the program for monitoring subclinical pathogens in rabbit colonies.

2. **RESPONSIBILITY**

Animal care staff, veterinary care staff, facility supervisors, facility manager.

3. **MATERIALS**

3.1. Blood collection materials

4. **PROCEDURES**

4.1. Monitor rabbit populations that are housed for more than 4 to 6 weeks.

4.2. Selection of rabbits for sample collection:

   4.2.1. Randomly select two rabbits from the population being monitored

   4.2.2. Ensure that the rabbits are at least 8 weeks old.

   4.2.3. Ensure that the rabbits have been housed with the same population for more than 4 to 6 weeks.

   4.2.4. In addition, sample sick rabbits, euthanized rabbits or those found dead as instructed by a veterinarian.

4.3. Every 6 months, submit:

   4.3.1. Serology sample:

      4.3.1.1. Collect 1.5mL of blood, centrifuge and freeze serum.

      4.3.1.2. Serology profile should include at least the following tests:

         4.3.1.2.1. Tyzzer’s

         4.3.1.2.2. Encephalitozoon cuniculi

         4.3.1.2.3. Treponema

   4.3.2. Pooled fecal flotation for parasitology testing:

      4.3.2.3. Collect at least 5 fecal pellets.

4.4. Sick animal or animals found dead:

   4.4.1. Consult veterinarian for additional instructions.

   4.4.2. Collect blood if possible for serology testing.

   4.4.3. Submit tissues and organs for pathology.

4.5. Health status reports:

   4.5.1. The facility veterinarian reviews all sentinel reports.

   4.5.2. If there are any health status problems, the veterinarian will contact the facility supervisor/manager and investigators concerned.