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Assessing mouse preferences for cage bedding amounts

In order to improve the welfare of laboratory mice, a number of different environmental enrichment strategies can be used to provide opportunities for them to engage in naturalistic behaviors. One example is providing mice with adequate cage bedding in which to dig and burrow. Freymann and colleagues carried out preference tests with group-housed female BALB/c and C57BL/6 mice to determine whether they preferred to spend time in cages with greater amounts of bedding. They conclude that the amount of bedding provided to mouse cages should be increased as much as practically possible to ensure that mice are provided with an enriched environment.

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Reviewing evaluation of animal research projects in Europe

Evaluation and authorization of research projects and training activities involving the use of animals is now mandatory under Directive 2010/63/EU. Thus far, member states have used a variety of approaches in the transposition and implementation of Directive 2010/63/EU, resulting in variation in project evaluation processes among the member states. Guillén *et al.* compare the approaches being implemented in five European Union member states (France, Germany, Spain, the Netherlands and the UK) and discuss how differences in project evaluation processes may affect their speed, flexibility and output. They suggest that all project evaluation processes should implement the key elements and principles of Directive 2010/63/EU to ensure a similar high level of ethical evaluation and animal welfare across Europe.

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Reducing allergen exposure in a laboratory animal facility

Within the biomedical research industry, people who work with laboratory animals may be at risk of developing laboratory animal allergy. Allergen concentrations in the workplace should be kept as low as is reasonably practicable for the protection of all people on the premises. This can be achieved in part by reviewing the risk of allergen exposure in specific areas of a facility and implementing appropriate infrastructure, environmental and performance controls to minimize that risk. Westall and colleagues describe their implementation of a systematic program of allergen monitoring and use of a range of control measures to reduce allergen concentrations in their animal facility.

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