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International contracts and collaborations

There is a 'dollars crunch' at your institution. At a management meeting a discussion develops around the idea of outsourcing some of the future animal-based work to a facility located in another country. As a leader of the laboratory animal program, you need to answer the question: "What do we need to consider before agreeing to an overseas contract to complement our internal efforts?" Stark answers this question as it relates to issues of animal care and use, regulatory and ethical concerns, legal obligations, and oversight of the work. His article focuses on international contracts and collaborations, but many of the principles discussed are also applicable to interinstitutional collaborations and contracts within the country where the laboratory animal program is based. [See page 37](#)

Looking for mice on the Web

Laboratory animal medicine professionals must be able to integrate information from a variety of sources to make sound decisions. To address concerns from pre-veterinary and veterinary students that information about the specialty is difficult to locate, DenHouter and Hankenson examined the utility of electronic search engines to provide links to appropriate websites of significant educational value to the field. They assembled a reference document to assist veterinary students, residents, and postdoctoral fellows in the acquisition of online texts, journals, newsletters, government regulations, and other sources of current information as they relate specifically to laboratory animal medicine. [See page 29](#)

A case for consistent diet composition

The diet fed to laboratory animals is one of many variables that can confound research results. Sabbatini and coworkers investigated the effect of the composition of commercial standard rodent diets on exocrine pancreatic function in rats. They compared two widely used commercial animal diets and found that diet composition greatly influences pancreatic secretion. Their results indicate that commercial diets should conform to the recommended composition requirements to avoid alterations in physiological functions that would eventually affect the results of biomedical research and that investigators should be keenly aware of the composition of the diets being fed to their animals. [See page 41](#)