



**MUTANT MOUSE RESOURCE AND
RESEARCH CENTER (MMRRC)**

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May 6, 2021

Dear Valued Customer,

As veterinarians in charge of our M3 Mouse Barrier Facility, we regret to inform you that we have recently identified an excluded bacteria during our standard rodent surveillance screening process.

We initially identified and confirmed *Corynebacteria bovis* from nude sentinel mice in two of our rooms (Rooms 2 and 15) by culture. At the time of submission, sentinel mice were in good health with no clinical signs. These results were confirmed by PCR. The affected sentinel animals have been culled, and out of an abundance of caution a more comprehensive investigation is underway to confirm the negative status of these breeding cages. The current findings will be reported in the next health report for M3.

Corynebacteria bovis is an opportunistic bacterium found as normal flora on animals and humans. This bacterium typically does not cause disease in healthy immunocompetent mice but it can result in corynebacterium-associated hyperkeratosis in nude mice and potentially other immunocompromised strains. Our very strict biosecurity practices when handling animal cages include diligent disinfection of holding rooms and animal cage change stations that greatly prevent risk of cross contamination between cages and rooms.

We have thoroughly checked the environment in the affected rooms via PCR swab and culture. All PCR results have come back negative and there has been no reported growth from the culture. We collected additional swabs from live mice and those PCR results have identified the agent in 4 additional rooms (Rooms 6, 14, 16, 17). At this time all rooms have been isolated and there is no movement of mice in or out of the vivarium, we are depopulating the nude colony to reduce the risk of further spread, and we are performing intensive cleaning and disinfection with frequent retesting and follow up. We are also performing additional testing in three rooms that have had equivocal results (Rooms 3 and 4) as well as rooms that have had negative results (Rooms 1 and 13).

We pride ourselves in operating at the highest level to provide mice to you with superior care. We apologize for this breach in pathogen security and want to assure our customers that we have done and continue to do everything necessary to prevent this from occurring again. We are available to answer any questions regarding our normal surveillance results and our vivarium husbandry practices. Our aim is to ensure you that we give the highest priority to using best practices of management, testing, and surveillance throughout our facility.

As the clinical veterinarians overseeing the M3 Mouse Barrier Facility and Mouse Biology Program vivaria, we want to personally thank you in advance for your understanding and provide you with our personal office numbers and emails below if you have any questions. You may also reach out to our customer service team at any time as well. Please let us know if you have any questions you need clarified.

Best Regards,

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April 14th, 2021

Dear Valued Customer,

As a valued customer of our M3 Mouse Barrier Facility, I am contacting you to inform you we have recently identified *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*, an excluded bacteria, from microbiological culture of the gastrointestinal tract of an embryo transfer dam and from fresh feces of her offspring during our standard rodent surveillance screening process.

Further screening has confirmed *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* in the gastrointestinal tract of CD1 animals in our breeding colony, housed in rooms 5 and 7, that is used for generating the pseudopregnant animals. Note importantly that none of the mice have shown any clinical signs of illness, have no abnormalities observed at necropsy, nor have any histopathological evidence of inflammation or other reaction.

Pseudomonas aeruginosa is an opportunistic organism found in the environment, plants, and animals and tends to live in moist environments. This bacterium typically does not cause disease in healthy immunocompetent mice. Our very strict biosecurity practices when handling animal cages include diligent disinfection of holding rooms and animal cage change stations that greatly prevent risk of cross contamination between cages and rooms. Sentinel animals submitted from all other vivarium rooms and drinking water and environmental samples continue to test negative, indicating an isolated incident that has not spread beyond the affected CD1 mice. Additionally, all embryo transfer dams have full necropsies before their offspring are allowed to be transferred for use, so we are confident that any animals that have been exported have not been affected.

Because this is now the third dam to offspring transmission incident in the last 18 months, we have decided to take more aggressive actions to eliminate any remaining sources of contamination. Therefore, we shall be completely depopulating all mice in affected rooms (rooms 5 and 7), conduct a full equipment and caging takedown, deep cleaning, and full decontamination of affected rooms, and re-establish a new CD1 breeding colony from commercially-sourced pathogen-free "elite" foundation stock from Charles River Laboratory. We will be working diligently over the next month to successfully accomplish these tasks while concurrently reorienting projects in progress to minimize operations and disruptions to business activities.

We pride ourselves in operating at the highest level to provide mice to you with superior care. We understand that pathogen positives can be a hindrance to your research, and we apologize for any inconvenience this has caused you. We are investing significant time and expense to investigate and resolve this issue. As a result, we are confident that we will be able to successful eliminate all potentially remaining contamination in order to return operations to normal as soon as possible. We will make sure to send a follow-up letter and update you on this situation once we have completed our transition to the new colony. We are available to answer any questions you may have.

As the veterinarian overseeing the M3 Mouse Barrier Facility and all Mouse Biology Program vivaria and veterinary care, I want to personally thank you in advance for your understanding and provide you with my personal office number and email below for if you have any questions. You may also reach out to our customer service team at any time as well. Please let us know if you have any questions you need clarified.

Best Regards,

Kristin Grimsrud, DVM, PhD

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