



**A Code of Practice for Canadian
Cattery Operations
2009**

Canadian Veterinary Medical Association

First Edition: 2009

Acknowledgements

The Canadian Veterinary Medical Association (CVMA) expresses sincere appreciation to **Dr. Janet Lalonde, Ms. Wiebke Heron, Ms. Nadine Gourkow, Dr. Nicolette Joosting, Dr. Marcus Litman, Dr. Anna Bolinder, Dr. Carol Morgan, Dr. Alice Crook,** and **Dr. Diane Frank** for their dedication and hard work in preparing this Code of Practice.

The CVMA is also grateful to the **Canadian Federation of Humane Societies**, through **Ms. Shelagh MacDonald**, for extensive participation in the preparation of the Code.

The CVMA also thanks the **Canadian Cat Association**, the **Canadian Council on Animal Care**, the **Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council** of Canada, **Dr. Susan Little**, and **Dr. Hugh Whitney** for providing review.

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Preface

Like the Codes of Practice developed by the National Farm Animal Care Council, the Canadian Federation of Humane Societies (CFHS), the CVMA, and those associated with the livestock industry, this Code of Practice for the care, management, and breeding of cats is a voluntary one. It can be used as an educational tool by cat breeders, members of the general public acquiring cats, and animal welfare groups, and also as a standard by all those interested in the promotion of sound care, management, and welfare practices.

Although there is no system to license catteries in Canada, some provinces or territories have laws or regulations covering certain aspects of the care of dogs and cats in breeding and boarding establishments. Consult the relevant provincial/territorial animal care or SPCA act.

The Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC) is the national organization responsible for setting and maintaining standards for the care and use of animals in research, teaching, and testing throughout Canada. The CCAC guidelines provide standards for animal facilities and ethical requirements associated with the care,

management, and use of all animals, including cats. All institutions, in which cats are used in research studies funded by granting councils, as well as federal and provincial government laboratories, must hold a CCAC Certificate of Good Animal Practice® indicating compliance with CCAC guidelines and policies, as assessed by the CCAC Assessment Program.

The recommendations that are contained in this Code of Practice for Canadian Cattery Operations will not be comprehensive for all circumstances. For example, cage and pen size will depend on the breed and the practices that can be applied to ensure the welfare of the cats being raised or used. As well, an important aspect of ensuring the well-being of each animal is by paying attention to its uniqueness. Undoubtedly, as additional research information becomes available and management practices and requirements change, these guidelines, too, will undergo change. Thus, this Code of Practice is a “living document,” subject to amendment as new information becomes available. For this voluntary Code to be fully effective, those involved in the care and handling of cats and kittens should accept and adopt the Code’s recommendations.

Definitions

HUMANE CARE

The term “humane care” will be used commonly in this Code of Practice, for it forms the basis for all animal care, management practices, and procedures. “Humane care” is an all-inclusive term and does not simply mean the avoidance of deliberate pain. Instead, the goal is that all avoidable pain, distress, discomfort, and factors causing anxiety and suffering are eliminated from the conditions under which cats are housed, bred, and raised. This includes selecting the proper site for a cattery to ensure optimal conditions are provided for the cats, particularly breeding cats or cats maintained in kennels. The means of confinement must also satisfy the cat’s social and exercise needs. Humane care also implies the maintenance of optimal sanitary and environmental conditions with regard to air pollution, noise, temperature, humidity, etc.

High quality, nutritional, contaminant-free food, adequate potable water, and appropriate accommodation, including shelter from the elements and unnecessary variations in temperature, must be provided. Cats should be raised at temperatures as close as possible to the comfort zone of the animal, appropriate to its age and condition. It is also necessary to provide adequate, regular supervision and efficient knowledgeable health care controls to ensure that animals are not harmed by incompatible cats, sick cats, or other adversarial animals or vermin. Sufficient numbers of experienced personnel should be employed as required. Such individuals must have compassion and respect for all living beings, particularly for those cats or kittens for which they are responsible. It is not sufficient that they have only knowledge of

feeding, watering, and removal of excrement; they must be knowledgeable concerning the animals themselves.

OTHER GENERAL

Breed: Cats with similar physical characteristics and related ancestry.

Breeder: Generically refers to a person who breeds cats. More specifically, the breeder of a litter is considered to be the owner of the dam (queen) at the time of breeding. (Note: cats may be owned outright or leased for breeding purposes).

Cattery: A facility where cats are kept, including breeding or boarding facilities, animal shelters, and pet stores.

Castrate: To surgically remove the testicles from a male cat (also “neuter”).

Conformation: The form, structure, and physical arrangement of body parts in accordance with the breed’s standards.

Dam: The mother of a cat.

Estrus: The sexually receptive period of a female cat during which she can become pregnant; commonly referred to as being “in heat” or “in season.”

Euthanasia: The term is derived from the Greek “eu” for “good” and “thanatos” for “death” or an easy death. The euphemisms for euthanize include “destroy,” “put down,” or most commonly “put to sleep.”

Gestation: The period of pregnancy in a cat (approximately 66 days with some variation).

Kitten: A cat under the age of 8 months.

Litter: Kittens born at the same time from the same queen.

Neuter: Spay or castrate a female or male cat.

Parturition: The act of labour or giving birth.

Queen: A female breeding cat.

Spay: To surgically remove the ovaries and often the uterus of a female cat.

Stud: A breeding male, also known as a tom.

BEHAVIOURAL TERMS

Defensive aggression: Threatening behaviour displayed by a cat experiencing fear by flattening its body, and giving warning signals such as hissing, growling, and spitting. A defensive aggressive cat will bite and show teeth and claws if the threat continues to approach and the cat has no escape route.

Hyperactivity: A behaviour pattern frequently characterized in cats by pacing, vocalizing, and restlessness.

Lethargy: Behaviour displayed as excessive quietness, absence of play in kittens, extended sleep periods, or lack of interest in feeding. It can be a sign of illness.

Socialization: The process by which a kitten learns to accept certain animal species including its own, as well as humans, in close proximity. It occurs most easily during a limited time span generally from 2 to 9 weeks of age, but should continue for several months.

Submission/dominance: Submission (deference) is signaled by cats in various ways, such as avoiding eye contact with a more dominant cat, or waiting for another cat to pass before moving into an area. More dominant cats may block the movement of subordinate cats, chase them, or stare at them. Relative rank can vary from one pair of cats to another, and can depend on the context. (Note: not all feline behaviourists agree about the significance of submissive or dominant postures in cats.)

Temperament: The behavioural characteristics of a cat that are relatively stable over time and across similar situations.

Acronyms

ACFA: American Cat Fanciers Association

CCAC: Canadian Council on Animal Care

CFHS: Canadian Federation of Humane Societies

CCA: Canadian Cat Association

CFA: The Cat Fanciers Association

CVMA: Canadian Veterinary Medical Association

NCAC: National Companion Animal Coalition (CVMA, Canadian Kennel Club, CFHS, PIJAC)

PIJAC: Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council

SPCA: Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals

TICA: The International Cat Association

SECTION I

The Selection of a Cat

Cats can be obtained from various sources, including breeders, pet stores, humane societies or SPCAs, and rescue groups. When selecting a particular cat from any of these sources it is important to match the characteristics of the cat with the owner.

Prospective cat owners are referred to “A Commonsense Guide to Selecting a Dog or a Cat,” published by the CVMA and available on the CVMA Animal Health Care Web site.¹

CATS

Cats are considered pedigreed and not purebred. Pedigreed cats are of known and recorded ancestry. Cat breeds are separated into breed classifications.

The term “breed” is used to describe natural breeds, established breeds, mutations, and hybrids.

BREEDERS

“Breeder” refers to the individual who is involved in the breeding of cats. In reference to a specific litter, the breeder is the owner or co-owner of the queen at the time she was bred. Breeders are direct and primary sources for kittens.

Individuals are involved in cat breeding for any number of reasons, among them the improvement of the breed and the progeny resulting from their breeding stock. Cats are mainly bred to be companion animals and are

not generally obtained to serve a function other than companionship.

Breeders range from small home breeders who keep their cats in their home to breeders with larger populations who have a cattery facility to house the cats. Good breeders adhere to generally recognized breeding practices and may be identified by the quality of their animals, well-maintained facilities, and a willingness to display the parents of the litter. Good breeders will have well-groomed, clean, healthy, and socially well-adjusted cats and kittens, and will provide evidence of vaccinations, and relevant health clearance(s) showing that breeding animals are free of certain genetic disorders or health issues. Good breeders will keep the kittens to age 10 to 12 weeks and will not supply kittens to pet stores.

Good breeders will provide a written guarantee of the health of the kitten, will have a written contract or agreement with the new owner to take the kitten or cat back for practically any reason, and will provide financial or other reasonable compensation in the event of certain genetic disorders or health issues as identified in a contract.

Poor breeders reflect the opposite, with run-down and/or crowded facilities; a reluctance to show the parents of a litter and other progeny; dirty, unhealthy, and ill-adjusted cats; kittens sold at a young age and often without proper vaccinations. Poor breeders also have little regard for the frequency of breeding or the age of breeding stock.

REGISTRIES

Good breeders of pedigreed cats will register their breeding cats and show cats, as well as

¹ www.animalhealthcare.ca

all litters, with one of the major registries listed below, and follow the breed standards when selecting breeding cats.

The Canadian Cat Association (CCA)
The American Cat Fanciers Association (ACFA)
The Cat Fanciers Association (CFA)
The Cat Fanciers Federation (CFF)
The International Cat Association (TICA)

IMPULSE BUYING

Good breeders will not sell to people looking to buy on impulse. Instead, they will spend time with the consumer to make sure that the chosen breed is compatible with the expectations of the consumer and that the new owner is prepared to adequately house and maintain the cat. Good breeders will educate consumers about allergies to cats and the possible drawbacks of cat ownership, especially for children with allergies to cats.

ALLERGIES

Good breeders will recommend that households with allergies consult a physician before acquiring a cat and make preparation for the cat in advance should the allergy not permit keeping the cat. Good breeders will not sell cats to households with young children that have known cat allergies or asthma.

POPULATION CONTROL

Regardless of the source of the cat, a cat owner who is not interested in the cat for

breeding purposes should be strongly encouraged to have their kitten or cat spayed or castrated at an appropriate age. Some breeders may even have all cats neutered before sale. From a health perspective this is very beneficial to the cat. An unaltered female cat will vocalize frequently and may develop reproductive health problems. The unaltered male (tom) cat will spray to mark territory, generally making him unsuitable as a house pet. There are also significant health benefits associated with neutering cats.

CONFORMATION STANDARDS FOR PEDIGREED CATS

The physical standard refers to the general shape and appearance of the cat. Most commonly associated with the pedigreed cat fancy, the breed standard is a description of the “ideal” appearance of any particular breed. Cat shows provide a forum in which the cat is judged against its written standard to determine the degree to which the standard has been met. Breed standards differ around the world and the different registries will recognize different breeds; some will not register certain breeds. The fundamental philosophy may differ as well.

The CFA is the world’s largest registry of pedigreed cats and registers cats worldwide including in Canada. It is a conservative registry. Adding new breeds is very difficult and requires much time and commitment. The CCA, founded in 1960, is the Canadian cat registry.

SECTION II

Housing and Accommodation

SITE

The site needs to be suitable to the needs of the cattery operation, and the cattery operation suited to the needs of the breed of cat to be housed. For small breeders, the cats may simply live in the house, with no specific confinement, other than providing a separate room or area for queens with kittens, and for studs. Regardless, the site must provide easy cattery maintenance, whether the cattery is one room or floor of the family home, or a completely separate building. The cattery must be well-maintained and clean, providing a healthy environment for housed cats.

A separate cattery facility will require sufficient land to accommodate the cattery structures. Zoning and proximity to neighbours need to be considered as cats can be very noisy and stud cats can be odorous.

An investigation of zoning restrictions, by-laws, building codes, and standards will provide valuable insight into the local requirements for the cattery operation. Researching and visiting existing, reputable cattery operations can provide insight into the site selection, including consideration of drainage, waste removal, and access to heat and electricity.

CONSTRUCTION

Interior walls and partitions may be constructed of masonry, metal, Mazonite, cement, plaster, or other washable, nonabsorbable, and easily sanitized building material. The walls should be smooth, durable, and impervious for proper cleaning and disinfection.

Exterior walls should be fire retardant and impervious to moisture. Doors, window sills, and window sashes may be constructed of wood, provided they are rendered impervious to moisture and are rodent and vermin resistant. (Caution: some wood preservative products are fatal to cats and/or cause illness.)

Combustible materials such as wood litter should be stored in a fire resistant container outside of the building. Clay and silicon litter should be stored in a well-ventilated area, preferably in a separate outside facility.

Fire extinguishers should be available, accessible, and consistent with fire and insurance codes.

ENVIRONMENT AND TEMPERATURE

Cat holding room temperatures are usually maintained at between 18°C and 22°C. The minimum sustained temperature for an indoor cattery facility is 15°C. The maximum sustained temperature for an indoor cattery should be 27°C, ideally lower for full-coated brachycephalic breeds.

Cats should be housed in temperatures as close as possible to the comfort level of the breed. For instance, a Persian, Maine coon, or long-haired domestic will have a much different comfort zone than a Cornish rex. Most cats require supplemental heat during adverse conditions. Considerations need to be given to age and overall condition of the individual cat. Older, very young, and infirm cats will require a warmer and more comfortable environment. Temperatures should be monitored and adjusted if needed.

Interior conditions should be constantly maintained, and fluctuations in temperature, light, and noise levels should be avoided. A thermometer and hygrometer should be placed at animal level.

Insulating material may be toxic or irritating to cats and should be inaccessible to even an inquisitive cat. Windows will provide the cats with access to natural glass-filtered sunlight and the chance to observe the outside environment. Birdhouses or feeders outside the windows offer a source of environmental enrichment. (See enrichment devices p. 19).

HUMIDITY

Humidity should be measured and maintained at 44% to 45%. The introduction of outside air or a dehumidifier and fan may help to maintain constant humidity.

ROOF

Roof coverings, fastened to sheeting or directly to the roof joists, should be constructed so as to protect the cats from adverse weather and to prevent the entrance of rodents and vermin into the cattery.

CEILING

Ceilings should be constructed of materials similar or equal to those of the walls and partitions. Ceilings, walls, and partitions should closely abut to prevent crevices that can lead to rodent infestation.

Corners of ceilings, walls, and partitions should be caulked and painted so that they may be completely sanitized and are resistant to cat urine from spraying toms.

Ceilings should be solid to prevent cats from escaping.

FLOORS

Floors should be constructed of dense mixed concrete or another material that when finished provides a smooth surface which is impervious to moisture and odour. This will facilitate cleaning and sanitizing.

When an impervious material like linoleum is placed on the floor, it should extend at least 20 cm up the walls. This material should be molded so that there are no crevices or cracks in the corners.

VENTILATION AND LIGHT

Proper air circulation is essential in preventing respiratory disease. Ventilation should be adequate to keep cat areas free from dampness, noxious odours, and drafts. A source of fresh air is critical in a cattery facility, as re-circulation of inside air distributes contaminants, odours, bacteria, viruses, fungi, and molds unless an adequate filter system is included.

When ambient temperature reaches 27°C (80°F), additional ventilation such as air conditioning or exhaust fans should be added. Drafts and chills should be prevented. High humidity promotes illness and disease, and should be avoided.

All cat holding rooms should be lit during daylight hours and artificially illuminated for access during darkness. The minimum light requirement is 8 hours per day. Sunlight is the preferred means of lighting, provided that shaded areas are available. Lighting should be as close as possible to natural conditions of duration and intensity. The cattery should have natural darkness for a sleeping period of at least 8 hours.

CAGES, PENS, AND ENCLOSURES

The primary enclosure should be structurally sound and maintained in good repair to protect the cats from injury, contain them, keep other animals out, and to enable the housed cats to remain dry and clean.

The primary enclosure should provide sufficient space to allow each enclosed cat to turn freely and to easily stand, sit, and lie in a comfortable position. The minimum primary enclosure space for a single 2 kg or greater cat should be a minimum of 1.5 m² in area and a minimum of 0.75 m in height (Appendix D). Quality of space is more important to cats than increasing space. Use vertical space for enrichment. Resting perches and a hiding area should be provided, as well as easy access to food, water, litter, and bedding. Cats housed in groups must be watched for submissiveness, fighting, and rejection of members because of the cat's natural instinct for territorial and personal defense. Extra resting boards placed at different levels within an enclosure allow cats to establish a "mini-territory" within the group housed together and minimizes the chance of aggression. There should be as many hiding areas and perches as there are cats. There should be corner shelves where shy cats can perch without the risk of being approached from behind. The need should be minimized for cats to cross paths with other cats to access food and water and litter pans.

The primary enclosure shall be constructed and maintained so that cats have convenient access to clean food, water, and litter. Cats may refuse to eat if litter trays and food dishes are in close proximity. Litter pans, at least one pan per cat, shall be located away from bedding and food and water.

A primary enclosure shall not be constructed or maintained with an exposed wire mesh. The number of cats in a primary enclosure

shall not exceed the number that would prevent proper ventilation and sanitation. To keep the stress level low, aggressive or overly exuberant cats should not be housed in the same enclosure as timid or lower ranking cats. Note that relative rank can vary from one pair to another, and depending on the context. (See below.)

TYPES OF HOUSING

Single Enriched Living

Single housing is appropriate only for short stays, unless the cat is not suited to communal living (see Communal Living). Some cats may prefer single housing.

Because of lack of space and environmental complexity, cats in single housing have less choice for behavioural expression. These cats may become frustrated or depressed. To meet the psychological needs of cats, housing must be enriched (see Section IV, Behavioural Needs.) Cats housed for longer terms may benefit from being moved around or by having their cage rearranged occasionally. (Be sure to monitor cats for stress, see Appendix A).

The single cage should provide:

- Separation between functional areas, such as food and water bowls secured on cage door, and an elevated bed.
- Some control over the amount of exposure to cattery activities.
- Opportunities to engage in a wide range of behaviours such as hiding, perching, playing with toys to simulate hunting behaviour (batting, pouncing, throwing up in the air), scratching, and playing with people.

- Substrates to facilitate scent marking. Cats feel at ease when their space is familiar – containing their own scent.

Communal Living

In view of the fact that cats hunt alone, they were long believed to be asocial. However, there is much evidence to the contrary. Cats living in colonies form strong bonds, particularly females who sometimes share the care of kittens. Cats engage in affiliative behaviour with other cats such as body rubbing on each other (allorubbing), grooming each other (allogrooming), nose touching (greeting behaviour), and play. Cats show a repertoire of submissive and dominant behaviours to reduce conflict.

In a natural setting, familiar cats tend to resolve conflict by increasing space between them. When creating communal spaces for adult cats that may not care much for each other, it is important to organize space in a way that minimizes the possibility of ongoing or repeated conflict as this can cause high stress. It is essential to recognize that when cats have not been exposed to other cats for their entire life, they may have little or no tolerance for other cats and may not be well suited for communal living. Cats that engage in aggressive behaviour or show signs of stress after 24 hours should be housed singly.

The use of communal enclosures can be counterproductive if not appropriately designed. Communal living must encourage social contact between cats while meeting their need for personal space and safety.

To meet the psychological needs of cats, the communal area should provide:

- More single size shelves than cats and at least one meter between shelves.
- At least one single size hiding area per cat.
- Several vantage points at different heights and with different views of the area.
- Corner shelf viewing points from which the cat cannot be approached from behind.
- Separation between feeding and elimination areas.
- Food and elimination areas should be located in places where shy cats cannot be intimidated by more confident cats.
- Enough free floor space for cat-cat play and interaction.
- At least one perching area that can fit several cats.

Introduction of new cats to a communal area

- A new cat arriving into a communal area changes the dynamic between all cats and is a known source of stress.
- Introduction of new cats should take several days.
- Place the incoming cat in a single cage within the communal.
- The cage should have a Plexiglas door with several small holes to enable visual and olfactory contact between cats.
- Provide a hiding area for the cat in the introduction cage.

- Once the incoming and resident cats seem relaxed, let the new cat explore.
- Monitor initial contact between cats.

WIRE FLOORS

Cats must not be kept on wire floors or any other material that will injure their feet or legs.

QUEENING FACILITIES

The queening area should be separate from other cats to permit privacy. A quiet, secure area should be provided that is of sufficient size to allow the queen ample opportunity to move around. Queens with kittens require additional space beyond the minimum requirement of 0.85 m³. The queening area should be quarantined or be the area entered first before the “dirtier” areas to minimize exposure of newborns.

Human supervision and immediate assistance is important during the queening period and the days following the birth of the kittens.

The queening area should be located in an area that will facilitate ongoing 24-hour supervision by the breeder.

The queening area might consist of a private pen containing an enclosed, easily accessed, covered queening box. This box should be lined with soft, easy-to-change bedding for the queen and the kittens. Bedding should be changed daily or more often if required.

Supplemental heat, generally in the form of a heat lamp, should provide an ambient temperature between 29°C and 32°C. Care should be taken so that the area is not overheated and that the kittens and queen can move out of the direct heat and return to it as desired.

SCRATCHING POSTS

Scratching posts allow for scratching behaviour and should be standard equipment in cat facilities. The primary enclosure or the exercise area should contain a scratching post so that cats can engage in the natural habit of scratching in an appropriate way. The post should be high enough for the cat to fully extend its body when scratching. Some cats like to scratch horizontal surfaces. Suitable material is a solid wooden post positioned securely and covered with sisal. For kittens that will be adopted to households, it is important to use a cat scratching post without carpet. Cats develop a preference for certain material and may begin to scratch that same material in the home.

Group housing should be equipped with several scratching posts, preferably placed both vertically and horizontally to provide for varying preferences by the cats. Scratching posts also allow for cat-cat olfactory communication.

LITTER BOXES

Litter boxes should be of appropriate size for an adult cat (at least 1 ½ times longer than the cat). Trays should be of sufficient size and height to allow the cat to scratch, dig, turn, and squat comfortably. Adequate litter material should be provided to allow the cats to engage in the complete sequence of elimination. Not all cats cover their feces. Commercial cat litter, sawdust, shavings, sand, or shredded paper will allow cats to satisfy their desire to dig.

Adequate litter pans should be provided to avoid contamination of the surrounding environment (high-sided rather than completely enclosed pans are suggested) and without having to compete for facilities. A

litter of kittens and the queen can share one large pan if it is cleaned more than once daily; the recommendation in any colony is one litter pan per cat, plus one. The litter pans should be of a material that is easily washed and disinfected daily, and of adequate size.

FOOD AND WATER

Weaned kittens and adult cats should be fed at least twice a day, unless otherwise specified by a veterinarian. Food should be free from contamination and should be wholesome, palatable, and of sufficient quantity and nutritive value to meet the

normal daily requirements for the condition and size of the cat. Food must be provided in sufficient amounts to ensure normal growth in kittens and maintenance of normal body weight in adults.

Cats must have continuous access to clean, palatable water. Food and water receptacles must be accessible to each individual and/or group of cats and should be located to prevent contamination by excreta. Feeding dishes are to be kept clean. Self-feeders may be used for the feeding of dry food and should be sanitized regularly to prevent mold, deterioration, or caking of food.

SECTION III

Care and Supervision

ATTENDANTS AND SUPERVISORY STAFF

Efficient regular supervision and an effective health care program should be provided on an ongoing basis. Staff should be experienced in the needs of cats and kittens. Such individuals must have compassion and respect for the cats and kittens for which they are responsible.

The attendants should understand the breed's characteristics, normal cat behaviour, and social interaction within a normal cat colony and should be provided with a copy of this Code of Practice.

IDENTIFICATION AND RECORDS

Identification of each cat as well as the maintenance of individual records is essential to good management practices.

Ideally, cats should be permanently identified by means of a tattoo on the abdomen or microchip implant.

Record-keeping is essential. Individual records should be developed by the time each litter is weaned. New owners should be provided with copies of the cat's individual records. The cattery should maintain and keep records for a minimum period (i.e., 5 years) and in such a way as to facilitate the diagnosis and surveillance of heritable or infectious diseases, such as polycystic kidney disease, sudden death, or other problems that may be genetic or transmissible.

Records for all litters should include a daily record of each kitten's progress, such as weight gain of neonates, weakness, supplemental feeding, etc., as well as numbers and sexes. Ideally, each kitten has its own record at the time of birth. Kittens should be weighed at birth and then daily for at least the next 4 weeks. Desirable and nondesirable traits should be noted. The records should specify individual birth weights, condition, and vigour.

Individual records should include breed, sex, date of birth, the name and description of the queen and tom, tattoo or microchip number, and FeLV/FIV status of the queen, tom and kitten, colour, and markings.

Both individual and litter records should include information concerning the nature of the food provided, any medications, vaccinations, and examinations for internal and external parasites and the results thereof.

CLEANING, SANITATION, AND DISINFECTION

The success of a good management program depends on the nature of the building, building materials, and the various types of equipment available for proper cleaning, sanitation, and disinfection.

Cleaning and sanitizing should be carried out daily. Individual circumstances may require more frequent cleaning.

Daily cleaning and disinfection with appropriate products, such as bleach or quaternary ammonium, are necessary to eliminate odours and bacterial or viral contamination, as well as to control parasites. Cleaning and disinfection are integral to a good preventative health program.

Isolation facilities must be provided for individual queens with litters that are experiencing upper respiratory tract or other illness. Ensure the isolation area meets the welfare, socialization, and development needs of the kittens and queen. Caretakers should be cognizant of the infectious and often asymptomatic nature of feline respiratory disease and have facilities to adequately disinfect their hands, clothing, and the isolation areas. The same principles apply to ANY infectious disease of cats.

Regardless of health status, caretakers should at least wash hands with soap and water (or an alcohol disinfectant product if hands are not soiled) between handling litters or individual adult cats.

PARASITE CONTROL

Certain internal parasites of cats are remarkably resistant to normal cleaning and disinfection and can remain viable in the environment for long periods of time. Even indoor-only cats may cycle low levels of the parasites from litter pan to mouth for years, undetectable by fecal examination. It is recommended that all cats be maintained on a parasite control program, and that kittens be routinely dewormed from 3 weeks of age. (Please see the Companion Animal Parasite Council recommendations²).

² Companion Animal Parasite Council
http://www.capcvet.org/?p=Guidelines_Ascarid&h=0&s=0

Caretakers should be knowledgeable about the zoonotic disease toxoplasmosis and take appropriate precautions when handling litter and feces.

External parasites require immediate appropriate treatment of all affected cats and kittens, as well as thorough cleaning and sanitization, and/or appropriate preventative treatment to prevent spread of the parasite to other cats and kittens in the colony.

Visiting toms and queens should be thoroughly checked or treated prophylactically for external and internal parasites and quarantined before introduction to the colony. Vaccinations should be up to date.

Outside runs, particularly those involving crushed stone or dirt floors are difficult to clean; this can lead to poor control of parasites. Good drainage, daily cleaning, and preventing contact with nonfacility animals will facilitate parasite management.

HEALTH PROGRAM

All cats should be under the supervision of a consulting veterinarian(s) responsible for the prevention and control of disease, the provision of adequate veterinary care, and, if the need for euthanasia arises, provision of a humane death. Catteries are encouraged to develop a comprehensive preventative health program with the consulting veterinarian that is supported by cattery visits, annual health checks of the queens and toms, appropriate vaccination (see Appendix B), appropriate feline immunodeficiency virus (FIV) and feline leukemia virus (FeLV) testing of queens and toms (Please see the American Association of Feline Practitioners' Retrovirus

Management guidelines³ for more information), prevention and management of dermatophyte infections (for example, ringworm), appropriate diagnostic testing, accurate record keeping, and follow-up regimes.

The keys to preventing disease in a cat colony are to avoid overcrowding, to provide sanitary living conditions with good nutrition of all cats, and to recognize and treat problems early and appropriately.

Also crucial is early recognition of abnormalities in behaviour, appetite, elimination, and coat/body condition by those individuals who see the cats and kittens on a day-to-day basis.

Breeders are encouraged to participate in and promote programs that diagnose, research, and prevent:

- inheritable diseases, such as polycystic kidney disease screening program, and
- infectious disease, such as FIV, FeLV, FIP.

BREEDING

The breeding of cats is a serious responsibility that requires a commitment of both time and financial resources. Breeders should ensure all breeding cats are of sound health and temperament and have been tested for inherited disorders where appropriate. Breeders should also ensure there is a market for the offspring prior to breeding.

Queens should not be bred before they are at least 80% of their usual bodyweight at maturity. Breeding may continue for as long as the queen is physically and mentally

healthy. Male cats should be provided with their own special breeding cages so that they are not stressed by trying to establish new territory at every breeding. After queens have been placed with the male and bred several times, they should not be allowed to wander because additional breeding can occur by undesirable males for up to two days later. This will prevent the possibility of unwanted cross-bred kittens in the litters. Cats are highly fertile and can conceive even while they are suckling so they should be isolated from intact males at all time unless breeding is desired. Although long-haired breeds may not be receptive to males in autumn and winter, to prevent unwanted pregnancies, queens must be regarded as being potentially fertile throughout the year. Queens should not be allowed to breed unless clients have expressed real interest in purchasing their kittens. Indiscriminate breeding is to be discouraged and queens should be ovariectomized as soon as there is no longer demand for their kittens.

Kittens must be provided with proper housing, nutrition, health care, exercise, and socialization. They should be gradually nutritionally weaned from their mother and introduced to food starting around 4–5 weeks, and completely weaned by 6–7 weeks. It is very important that the kittens be exposed to a range of people and stimuli so that they will adjust to novel situations, environments, and people when they go to their new homes. The minimum age for kittens to be placed in their new homes is 8 weeks; however, 10–12 weeks is preferred as kittens are generally more robust and will be more socially developed by that time.

³ American Association of Feline Practitioners
<http://www.catvets.com/professionals/guidelines/publications/?Id=323>

BREEDING AND WELFARE

Breeding for extreme types may be associated with negative effects on the welfare of both the queen and her offspring. Breeders should be aware, through reading and consultation with their veterinarian, of any problems prevalent in their breed. Breeders must also take steps to eliminate genetic defects by establishing suitable breeding programs, including (when possible) testing and certifying that all breeding stock is clear of genetic disorders

that are prevalent in that breed. Breeders should provide written guarantees against such disorders in the kittens they sell.

In *The Welfare of Cats*⁴, Steiger lists various cat breeds and their associated welfare problems, and discusses principles of responsible breeding and measures to improve welfare. Breeders and judges are urged to reconsider breed standards in light of welfare-associated problems in extreme cat breeds.

⁴ Steiger A. Breeding and welfare. In: *The Welfare of Cats*. Rochlitz I, ed. The Netherlands: Springer, 2005:259-276.

SECTION IV

Behavioural Needs

GENERAL

The physical and mental well-being of domestic cats in confined facilities is greatly improved in an environment where the cats can express a wide range of normal feline behaviours. The complexity of a cat's needs should be kept in mind when designing and developing catteries or other animal quarters. The cats must be allowed to engage in as many species-typical activities as possible. (See Appendix A for more information)

Sufficient space, proper and comfortable housing complete with stimulating physical facilities and activities, cat-to-cat socialization, and human contact are all important elements of good housing. Housing is a major factor contributing to the cat's well-being. Cats housed singly need more stimulation than those in communal pens – they will need more social contact (i.e., play sessions). Wherever possible, a cage-free environment is preferred for housing cats in groups and is considered more conducive to a variable, stimulating, and less stressful environment. Once established, most socialized cats respond well to communal living. Group housing can contain up to 15–20 cats, although smaller groups may be most desirable. Smaller groups formed by, for example, removing walls on solitary cages to create pair or quad housing. (See also pages 11–13.)

Individual variations in personalities and compatibility must be understood before arranging the groups or introducing new cats to an already established group. Overly large groups may result in excessive fighting, causing problems for subordinate (or more timid) individuals. Relative rank can vary from one pair of cats to another and can vary depending on context.

Play is an important factor in feline well-being. Cats and kittens should have the opportunity to engage in simulated hunting behaviour through play, including behaviours that simulate the hunting sequence. They should also have opportunities for inanimate play with rolling and batting toys. Play may be facilitated through enrichment devices, cat-to-cat contact, or human-cat interaction.

ENRICHMENT DEVICES

Access to toys enriches the environment for cats and stimulates play activity.

- Play behaviour and climbing needs may be supplied by children's kindergarten play equipment or other climbing structures.
- Furniture and toys should not restrict the free floor space necessary for socialization with other cats.

- Cats' patterns of play reflect predatory behaviour specialized for prey such as rodents or birds. A prey-sized moving object will draw a cat's attention. Appropriate toys create movement and noise that intrigue the cat.
- Toys may be hung or placed to encourage jumping, batting, pouncing and running. It is also important that toys be safe, and not have chewable or swallowable parts.
- Toys need to be changed about every three days to generate renewed interest, and may be reintroduced after a short period of removal. It is important that toys be appropriately sanitized if they are interchanged among different groups.

Cardboard boxes placed in the housing area are popular as hiding places or resting areas. Specially designed boxes⁵ improve cat well-being by providing:

- opportunities to engage in a wide range of behaviour (hiding, perching, jumping up/down);
- choice of viewing points;
- choice of textures;
- opportunities for marking (face rubbing on box), scratching; and
- more control over the amount of exposure to people or other cats.

⁵ www.sPCA.bc.ca/hideperchgo/HidePerchGo.asp

SOCIALIZATION

Socialization with people and other cats is a critical part of every cattery operation. Cats that are unsocialized with people and other cats become poor pets and are unsuitable for breeding stock.

Socialization is a response to learned behaviour. The ability to become sociable differs from cat to cat and may relate to genetic or family dispositions. However, any cat raised in isolation or deprived of sufficient contact with animals of its own kind will develop abnormal social behaviour. Auditory socialization should be provided in breeding facilities. Kittens should be exposed to household sounds such as toilets flushing, vacuum cleaner, doorbells, and so on to prepare them for home life. Commercial CDs of these sounds are available.

CAT-TO-CAT INTERACTION

Social relationships develop within the first two months of a cat's life. Following this time period, cats need continued socialization with other cats.

Most social bonds between cats occur between adults and juveniles with the strongest bonds occurring between family members and between females.

Social hierarchies develop within a group of cats. Aggressive behaviour can be minimized by providing sufficient housing area and adequate structures for hiding and seclusion. Independent of the housing system, cats should be given the chance to interact with other cats daily.

Visual and olfactory contact is important for cat-to-cat interaction. Cats communicate with each other through scent marking, a

behaviour promoted by offering furniture or objects for the cats to rub on. Visual cues are expressed in body and tail posture as well as facial expression with ears, eyes, mouth, and lips.

CAT-TO-HUMAN INTERACTION

Social behaviour is also fostered by interactions with humans. The socialization of kittens to people must be introduced within the kitten's first three weeks of life. Older kittens should receive human contact for a minimum of 40 minutes daily. Contact with more than one person increases acceptance of humans later in life.

Adult cats should be given the opportunity for individual human contact routinely, preferably daily or at least five days a week.

Interaction should be a positive experience for the cat and may take place during feeding time, grooming time, play time with interactive toys, or as "quiet time" when the animal caretaker is present in the housing quarters and available for interaction if the cat so chooses. Do not hand play with cats as this may cause some cats to develop predatory play behaviour towards humans.

Socialization of the kittens and cats to human beings and other cats should be a goal of all those who care for the animals. Kittens should remain in sibling and colony contact for a minimum of 8 weeks (ideally 10-12 weeks) and be handled by humans, including children, from 3 weeks of age until sold. The social development needs of the kitten into early adulthood should be explained clearly to the new owners.

SECTION V

Transportation

A comprehensive set of regulations with regards to the transportation of cats is legislated within the *Health of Animals Act* (Canada). Sections discuss pre-shipping concerns associated with both import and export of cats.

The following points should be addressed when transporting cats.

- Within the cattery, all animals should be handled on a daily basis to facilitate restraint and ensure socialization.
- Cats or kittens should be conditioned to their shipping container to learn to regard it as a comfort and security zone prior to shipping.
- Shipping stresses the animal by causing changes in immune function and thereby making it more susceptible to disease.
- Cat carriers (cages) must meet the requirements of the Live Animal Regulation of the International Air Transport Association (IATA) for import/export air transport.
- Proper health certificates and vaccination requirements should be in order prior to shipping the cat to the desired destination or when importing a cat or kitten into Canada.
- Weather conditions should be assessed prior to shipping to prevent possible harm to the animal from excessive heat or cold.
- Kittens should be at least 8 weeks of age before shipping and should be transported by the fastest route possible. If a kitten is to be in transit more than 4 to 6 hours, provision must be made for food and water en route.
- Every vehicle in which cats and kittens are transported must be free of mechanical defects and designed in such a fashion as to provide adequate levels of fresh air at a temperature suitable for the health, welfare, and comfort of the animals. Containers holding live animals should not be carried in trunks or in the open backs of vehicles. The vehicle should be designed and properly maintained in order to prevent the entrance of exhaust fumes.
- Individuals who are responsible for shipping animals should establish that those handling the animals in transit recognize their responsibility for the health, welfare, and safety of the animals. Qualified individuals with proper training in the care of animals should be selected.
- The shipper should notify the consignee of the actual time of departure, expected transit time and stopovers, designated destination, and expected time of arrival. The consignee must ensure that arrangements are in place to receive the animals and, if customs or health examinations are required to clear the animals, that those individuals are notified and at the destination site when the cats arrive. Arrangements should be in place for any emergency care or treatment or, if quarantine is a

requirement, that acceptable facilities are available with qualified personnel.

- While most containers and most agencies or transporting companies allow only one animal in a container, there are situations where containers are designed to handle more than one animal in comfort. Where more than one cat is transported in a large container or cage, all animals so transported should be compatible and socially adapted to the company of other cats. Cats that have aggressive tendencies or behaviour should not be mixed. Females in estrus (heat) should not be transported in the same cage with a tom.
- To ensure the welfare of cats and kittens during transportation, preplanning is essential. This includes making certain that proper documentation, containers, fastest and safest routing, and notification of arrival are in place before the journey starts.
- All personnel in the transport chain should be adequately trained and experienced with the necessary requirements, in order to maintain and ensure the health and well-being of cats before and during transportation as well as at the final destination.
- Tranquilization or sedation is not generally recommended, and should only be used on the advice of a veterinarian, as certain drugs can be counter-productive to safe, humane transport.

SECTION VI

Education

An important aspect of cattery ownership and breeding is that all those involved must be knowledgeable concerning the needs of the cats and kittens for whose care and treatment they are responsible. Every effort must be made to discourage impulse buying. This may be achieved through education by breeders, cattery operators, pet shops, animal welfare organizations, humane societies and SPCAs, the CCA, and the CVMA.

Breeders/cattery owners should educate themselves with the most current information available on their breed(s) and breeding practices and use this information to create rigorous training standards for their staff. Staff members need to be aware of their responsibility to provide high quality, humane treatment to the animals in their care at all times.

Buyers need to be informed in writing of any potential health issues, as well as which veterinary care/procedures have been performed and which are yet necessary. Additional information provided at the time of purchase should address routine health care, behaviour, spaying/neutering, responsibilities to cats, and community standards for cat ownership. Kittens should not be sold before 8 weeks of age.

Breeders must spend time to screen and educate buyers, and to ensure buyers are aware of their responsibilities as a pet owner. Kittens and cats should be matched with good, caring homes. Breeders should provide a written guarantee of health to all buyers, indicating what compensation would be provided in the event of a genetic disorder or health concern.

SECTION VII

Emergencies and Unforeseen Problems

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Preventive medicine is the dominant theme in good cattery management. Despite good efforts to prevent illness or accident, emergencies will occur. A well-managed cattery will have an established rapport with a local veterinary hospital to deal with emergencies or unforeseen problems.

A standard emergency/crisis plan should include emergency contact numbers for all staff, a local consulting veterinarian, local animal control, poison control centre, and local emergency services such as fire, ambulance, and police. The plan should include detailed instructions for protecting staff and animal health in emergency or unforeseen situations, including:

- sickness, injury or death,
- cat fights,
- cat bites to employees or visitors,
- fire,
- flooding,
- power outage,
- evacuation,
- exposure to chemicals or other noxious stimuli, and
- escape of animals.

Written procedures for cat care should be posted within the facility and any satellite locations so that they are available to all employees at all times. These procedures should include methods of handling sickness, injury, or death of cats and should include telephone numbers of veterinarians and back-up car transportation. As part of their required training, all staff should be familiarized with the procedures.

Specific written procedures should be prepared for cat escapes, exposure to chemicals, and cat bites.

All catteries should have emergency evacuation capabilities. Emergency procedures should be posted, clearly understood by all staff, and updated regularly.

Emergency equipment should be installed, including an effective smoke and fire detection system, fire extinguishers that are appropriately rated and emergency lighting systems.

Cattery owners should consult with local fire departments and request a site visit to review their emergency preparedness and to familiarize emergency responders with their site and operation.

SECTION VIII

Euthanasia

The term is derived from the Greek “eu” for “good” and “thanatos” for “death” or an easy death. In veterinary terms it is used to describe the humane ending of an animal’s life. Euthanasia is warranted when an animal is in a state of illness, pain, or distress that cannot be alleviated nor reasonably expected to abate.

Euthanasia must be carried out by a trained individual, preferably a veterinarian, so that the animal does not experience panic, pain, or distress. The veterinarian should use professional judgment in deciding when cats or kittens must be euthanized.

The method of euthanasia must render the animal irreversibly unconscious as rapidly as possible with the least possible pain, fear, and anxiety, followed quickly by cessation of cardiac and respiratory function. It is broadly accepted that the most humane method for euthanizing individual cats is the intravenous injection of a concentrated barbiturate.⁶ Ideally, animals should be sedated prior to the administration of a barbiturate.

The experience, training, sensitivity, and compassion of the individual are important issues when considering whether an individual is competent to perform the procedure of euthanasia.

As well as being humane, the method used for euthanasia must:

- produce minimal undesirable physiological and psychological effects on the animal,
- be compatible with the requirements and the conditions under which the procedure must be performed,
- be safe and produce minimal stress for the operator and any assistants or observers,
- have minimal ecological impact, and
- be carried out in a location separate from other animals.

⁶ Canadian Veterinary Medical Association’s Euthanasia position statement
<http://canadianveterinarians.net/ShowText.aspx?ResourceID=34>

APPENDIX A

Cat Welfare

Welfare is best described as a continuum from poor to good. Stress, disease, and abnormal behaviour such as inhibition of feeding or engaging in repetitive behaviour (stereotypies) are all indicators of poor welfare. The absence of such indicators is, however, not sufficient to place the animal on the “good” end of the welfare continuum. In the case of cats, indicators of good welfare may include behaviours such as object and social play, affiliative behaviour towards humans and cats (when housed communally), face rubbing, “normal” use of space, interest in the environment, and so on. Equating welfare to the absence of stress, disease, and emotional distress would be equivalent to saying that when a human is not physically or mentally ill, that automatically means that she or he leads a happy and fulfilling life.

The environmental and social conditions needed for good welfare vary from individual to individual depending on personality, previous learning experience, life stage, and so on. In an effort to improve welfare, many humane groups and organizations responsible for animal care have embraced the scientific concept of the Five Freedoms (Farm Animal Welfare Council www.fawc.org.uk/freedoms.htm).

THE FIVE FREEDOMS

- 1. Freedom from hunger and thirst** - by ready access to fresh water and a diet to maintain full health and vigour.
- 2. Freedom from pain, injury, or disease** - by prevention or rapid diagnosis and treatment.
- 3. Freedom from discomfort** - by providing an appropriate environment including shelter and a comfortable resting area.
- 4. Freedom from fear and distress** - by ensuring conditions and treatment which avoid mental suffering.
- 5. Freedom to express normal behaviour** - by providing sufficient space, proper facilities and company of the animal's own kind.

Freedom 1: Freedom from hunger and thirst

To meet this freedom, it is important to understand the feeding behaviour of cats.

- Close proximity between feeding and elimination areas may inhibit eating or drinking.

- In communal housing, confident cats may restrict access to resources such as food and water from less confident cats. Positioning of bowls must ensure access for all cats.
- Cats in communal housing must be monitored for dehydration and body condition to ensure they are getting proper nutrition.
- When under stress, some cats do not eat. Reducing stress is essential to encourage feeding behaviour.
- Pet cats that are anxious may not engage in feeding behaviour unless petted by a familiar human.

Freedom 2: Freedom from pain, injury, or disease

To meet this freedom, it is important to recognize behavioural and clinical signs of disease and pain. Internal communication among staff members must be efficient and decisions must be prompt to ensure veterinary care is provided at the first indication that the animal is not well. Geriatric cats housed in communal pens may injure themselves or experience pain when jumping up or down to, or from, a shelf. Steps or ramps must be provided to reduce the risk of injury.

Freedom 3: Freedom from discomfort

Comfort needs are species-specific but vary based on individual preference, age, and previous experience. To meet this freedom, cat enclosures must provide a waste-free living area with appropriate ambient temperature, natural light, good ventilation, and comfortable bedding. As geriatric cats are often more fragile than younger ones, communal enclosures in particular must provide for the comfort needs of geriatric cats.

Freedom 4: Freedom from fear and distress

To meet this freedom, an environment must be provided that enables cats to self-manage stress and negative emotions, such as having the opportunity to hide. Opportunities for positive social interaction with people and other cats must also be provided.

Anxiety is an emotional state that the cat experiences when it is uncertain about the environment, usually because it is novel. Anxiety is defined as the anticipation of a future danger or threat – real or imaginary. The cat needs to assess what is happening and the potential for danger. Posture varies with the intensity and duration of the stimulus and the individuality of the cat.

Stimuli that may cause fear and anxiety in cats include the arrival of a stranger, intrusion into the cat's personal space, sudden movements, loud noises, novel objects or smells, and loss of control over the environment.

Behavioural indications of fear and/or anxiety

- The cat may be immobile at the back of cage.
- Eyelids may be wide open with pupils partially or fully dilated.
- Eyes may be pressed shut indicating feigned sleep.
- There may be reduction or complete inhibition of self maintenance behaviour.
- The cat may lie flat – immobile in the litter box with eyes peering over the edge.
- Body and ears are flattened, whiskers are retracted, and tail is tightly held near the body.
- The cat may urinate or defecate.
- The cat may drool excessively or repeatedly lick the lips.

Freedom 5: Freedom to express normal behaviour

To meet this freedom, environmental and social enrichment must be provided to enable the cat to engage in a wide range of behaviours normally expected of cats known to enjoy good welfare. Exercise and social activities such as object play, affiliative behaviour, rubbing, exploring, chasing, pouncing, and so on (these activities will vary based on personality and age) will ensure that cats are enjoying physical and psychological contentment.

When animals in captivity are not able to engage in the behaviour normal to their species, they may become frustrated. This is true of cats housed in traditional kennel or shelter settings that offer few opportunities for meaningful interaction with the environment.

Behavioural indications of frustration

Extroverted cats that suffer from frustration may show the following behaviours:

- Be moody (friendly one minute, aggressive the next)
- Seem to be friendly, trying to catch people passing by with their paw
- Be very vocal
- Engage in escape behaviour including pacing or pawing a cage closure
- Spray or eliminate outside the litter box (also associated with anxiety)
- Sit at the front of the cage, meowing continuously, with intensity increasing when you approach or depart
- Seek eye contact
- Continuously try to open the cage
- Pace
- Shred or destroy cage items
- Turn all items upside down (can be a sign of frustration if the cat is not also trying to hide)

Introverted cats may choose to relieve their frustration with quiet repetitive behaviours, such as:

- Over grooming or focus licking on one area of the body causing damage to the skin (This may also be a sign of a medical condition or a response to pain.)
- Self-mutilation (as above)
- Sucking, chewing or eating non-edible items (These behaviours may also occur with gastrointestinal disorders.)
- Focusing interest on one part of the cage

Reference

Gourkow N, Fraser D. The effect of housing and handling practices on the welfare, behaviour and selection of domestic cats (*Felis sylvestris catus*) by adopters in an animal shelter *Animal Welfare* 2006;15:371-377.

www.sPCA.bc.ca/hideperchgo/

APPENDIX B
Feline Vaccines—Specific Recommendations

RECOMMENDED VACCINATION SCHEDULE IN A BREEDING CATTERY

Vaccine	Type of vaccine	Schedule	Vaccine Site
Feline Rhinotracheitis Virus (Feline Herpes Virus –1)	First – can be intranasal Killed	8 weeks 12 weeks 16 weeks	Below elbow right forelimb subcutaneous
Feline Calici Virus	Killed	Given with FVRCP combination	
Feline Panleukopenia Virus	Killed	Given with FVRCP combination	
Feline Chlamydia	Killed/modified live	Given with FVRCP combination if upper respiratory tract disease is a problem in the cattery	
<i>Bordetella bronchiseptica</i>	Intranasal	Optional - Given if upper respiratory tract disease is a problem in the cattery	
Feline Leukemia Virus		Optional 12 weeks 16 weeks	Below stifle left hind limb subcutaneous
Feline Immunodeficiency Virus		Optional – Cats and kittens previously unvaccinated for FIV should test negative for FIV and FeLV before giving this vaccine. 12 weeks 16 weeks 20 weeks	Below elbow left forelimb subcutaneous
FIP		Not recommended	
Rabies	Killed virus; recombinant vaccine		Below stifle right hind limb subcutaneous

FIV—feline immunodeficiency virus; FeLV—feline leukemia virus; FIP—feline infectious peritonitis; FVRCP—feline viral rhinotracheitis calicivirus panleukopenia

Vaccines should be boosted at intervals as recommended by the consulting veterinarian. Veterinarians may propose a different vaccination schedule according to specific requirements. Vaccine sites may vary according to the veterinarian, but should be documented clearly in the kitten's medical record and never given in the "scruff" or intramuscularly.

Vaccines form an integral part of the cattery preventative health program. Disease control and prevention should be a primary consideration. Catteries are encouraged to develop a comprehensive preventative health program with a consulting veterinarian that is supported by cattery visits, annual health checks of the queens and toms, regular FIV and FeLV testing of queens and toms, appropriate diagnostic testing, accurate record keeping, and follow-up regimes.

Rabies is a fatal viral disease that can affect all mammals. In Canada, pet owners are advised to vaccinate their pets according to provincial recommendations. Rabies vaccination is required every year in some areas and in other areas every three years after the first booster vaccine. Local authorities should be consulted. Although there is some risk of reaction to vaccinations, the public health consequences of not vaccinating are high. Consult your local veterinarian for advice on routine vaccinations.

For more detailed vaccination recommendations (American Association of Feline Practitioners) please see <http://www.catvets.com/professionals/guidelines/publications/?Id=176> or <http://www.winnfelinehealth.org/health/vaccination-guidelines.html#recommendations>

APPENDIX C

The Canadian Veterinary Medical Association Position Statement on Onychectomy (Declawing) of the Domestic Feline*

Position

“Declawing of domestic cats should be considered only after attempts have been made to prevent the cat from using its claws destructively or when clawing presents a zoonotic risk for its owner(s). The CVMA believes it is the obligation of veterinarians to provide cat owners with complete education with regard to feline onychectomy.”

Background

The following points are the foundation for full understanding and disclosure regarding declawing:

1. Scratching is a normal feline behavior, is a means for cats to mark their territory both visually and with scent, and is used for claw conditioning ("husk" removal) and stretching activity.
2. Owners must provide suitable implements for normal scratching behavior. Examples are scratching posts, cardboard boxes, lumber or logs, and carpet or fabric remnants affixed to stationary objects. Implements should be tall or long enough to allow full stretching, and be firmly anchored to provide necessary resistance to scratching. Cats should be positively reinforced in the use of these implements.
3. Appropriate claw care (consisting of trimming the claws every 1-2 weeks) should be provided to prevent injury or damage to household items.
4. Surgical declawing is not a medically necessary procedure for the cat in most cases. While rare in occurrence, there are inherent risks and complications with any surgical procedure including, but not limited to, anesthetic complications, hemorrhage, infection and pain. If onychectomy is performed, appropriate use of safe and effective anesthetic agents and the use of safe peri-operative analgesics for an appropriate length of time are imperative. The surgical alternative of tendonectomy is not recommended.
5. Declawed cats should be housed indoors.
6. Scientific data does indicate that cats that have destructive clawing behavior are more likely to be euthanized, or more readily relinquished, released, or abandoned, thereby contributing to the homeless cat population. When scratching behavior is an issue as to whether or not a particular cat can remain as an acceptable household pet in a particular home, surgical onychectomy may be considered.
7. There is no scientific evidence that declawing leads to behavioral abnormalities when the behavior of declawed cats is compared with that of cats in control groups.

References

1. Frank D. Management problems in cats. In: Horwitz DF, Mills DS, Heath S, eds. *British Small Animal Veterinary Association (BSAVA) Manual of Canine and Feline Behavioural Medicine*. Ames, Iowa: Blackwell Publ, 2002.
 2. Overall K. *Clinical behavioural medicine for small animals*. St. Louis, Missouri: Mosby-Year Book, 1997.
- * This statement is based on that of the American Veterinary Medical Association, (adopted March 2003), and is used with permission.

(Revised July 2004)

APPENDIX D
Recommended Minimum Space Requirements for Cats⁷

	<i>Minimum floor area per cat (m²)</i>		<i>Minimum Height (m)</i>
	<i>Cage</i>	<i>Group housed (pen)</i>	
<i>Adult cat</i>	<i>1.5</i>	<i>1.7</i>	<i>0.75 (cage)</i> <i>1.75 (pen)</i>
<i>Kittens < 12 weeks</i>	<i>1.5</i>	<i>0.75</i>	

⁷ Canadian Federation of Humane Societies. Shelter Operations Manual. Ottawa, Canada: CFHS, 2007:86.

APPENDIX E
***Organizations that Provide Information
on the Care and Humane Treatment of Cats***

Canadian Veterinary Medical Association
339 Booth Street
Ottawa, Ontario
K1R 7K1
www.canadianveterinarians.net

Canadian Federation of Humane Societies
102-30 Concourse Gate
Ottawa, Ontario
K2E 7V7
www.cfhs.ca

Canadian Cat Association
5045 Orbitor Drive, Building 12, Suite 102
Mississauga, Ontario
L4W 4Y4
www.cca-afc.com

The Cat Fanciers Association Inc.
1805 Atlantic Avenue
Box 1005
Manasquan, New Jersey, USA
08736-0805
Tel: (732) 528-9797
www.cfainc.org

**Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council of
Canada**
2495 Lancaster Road, Suite 202
Ottawa, Ontario
K1B 4L5
www.pijaccanada.com

Animal Alliance of Canada
101-221 Broadview Avenue
Toronto, Ontario
M4M 2G3
www.animalalliance.ca

**British Columbia Society for the
Prevention of Cruelty to Animals**
Behaviour & Welfare Dept.
1245 East 7th Avenue,
Vancouver, British Columbia
V5T 1R1
www.spca.bc.ca