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Column E Explanation

This form is intended as an aid to completing the Column E explanation. It is not an official form and its use is voluntary. Names, addresses, protocols, veterinary care programs, and the like, are not required as part of an explanation. A Column E explanation must be written so as to be understood by lay persons as well as scientists.

1. Registration Number: 32-R-0027

2. Number 181 of animals used in this study.

3. Species (common name) Marsh Rice Rats of animals used in the study.

4. Explain the procedure producing pain and/or distress.
See attached

5. Provide scientific justification why pain and/or distress could not be relieved. State methods or means used to determine that pain and/or distress relief would interfere with test results. (For Federally mandated testing, see Item 6 below)

See attached

6. What, if any, federal regulations require this procedure? Cite the agency, the code of Federal Regulations (CFR) title number and the specific section number (e.g., APHIS, 9 CFR 113.102):

Agency _____ CFR _____

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Provide a scientific justification to explain why the use of anesthetics, analgesics, sedatives or tranquilizers during and/or following painful or distressing procedures is contraindicated:

Collection of trunk blood samples in two experiments performed required rapid sacrifice to prevent a potential stress-induced alteration of neurohormone (melatonin) levels. Therefore, no anesthetic or tranquilizing drugs were used prior to sacrifice as is recommended by the AVMA Panel on Euthanasia. One experiment examined the effects of different methods of euthanasia on pineal gland melatonin content and, therefore, drugs could not be used as I did not want to risk altering the data by the use of drugs. Our results showed that the method of euthanasia used did significantly influence pineal melatonin content. Based on this result the second experiment (Effects of Ontogeny on Pineal Melatonin Content in Juvenile Rice Rats) also did not use any drugs as we had definitive evidence that the method of euthanasia could influence pineal melatonin content in rice rats.

In addition, literature searches conducted indicate that rapid euthanasia without the use of anesthesia is a necessary research technique whenever there is a likelihood of anesthesia or stress interfering with the chemistry of the tissues under investigation. As this could potentially happen, I did not want to jeopardize the outcome of the experiments by administering any drugs to these animals prior to decapitation. That would defeat the purpose of the experiments and possibly result in the use of additional animals, an outcome that the IACUC Committee wants to avoid. In support of the use of decapitation only, Nakai et al., 2005 state that it is critical to avoid anaesthetizing experimental animals and that decapitation is the preferred method for euthanasia when conducting neurochemical studies. In addition, Holson, 1992, has shown that euthanasia by decapitation produces prompt, painless unconsciousness in laboratory rodents, while Derr, 1991 has shown that the maximum time that pain and distress could be perceived would be about 2.7 seconds and that decapitation of rats may be considered a humane method of euthanasia. Lastly, Vanderwolf, 1988 concluded the cerebral reaction to decapitation does not resemble the cerebral reaction to painful stimuli and that decapitation would also not be considered inhumane. Recently, the ACLAM Task Force on Rodent Euthanasia issued a report on the effects of decapitation alone on various biological parameters, but no information was included regarding effects on the neurohormone of interest (melatonin from the pineal gland). Since little or nothing is known it was advisable to perform these studies utilizing only decapitation to prevent possible effects on the data being obtained.