



United States Department of Agriculture

Research, Education and Economics  
Agricultural Research Service

November 30, 2006

Mr. Edward Hammond  
The Sunshine Project  
1920 Stuart Street  
Berkeley, California 94703

Dear Mr. Hammond:

This is in response to your letter dated October 11, 2006, to the "Director of Biosafety, USDA, ARS, Pacific West Area...Albany, California." Your letter requests the USDA, ARS, Pacific West Area (PWA) Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC) Minutes from May 1, 2003, to the present. Your request is being processed pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), 5 U.S.C. 552, as the NIH Guidelines do not preclude federal agencies from complying with the FOIA when responding to requests under Section IV-B-2-a(7). Because this office is responsible for administering the FOIA for ARS, your request was forwarded to us for response. We received your request on October 30, 2006, and assigned it FOIA No. 07-20. Your initial letter to the Director of Biosafety was never received by that office.

We contacted the PWA Area Office to search for records responsive to your request. Enclosed are minutes of three IBC meetings held during the time you specified. Sensitive information has been withheld from the records and is exempt from disclosure pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 552(b)(2) of the FOIA. Exemption 2 protects sensitive critical infrastructure information related to security and safety. You have a right to appeal the denial of this information by writing to the Administrator, ARS, USDA, Room 302, Administration Building, 14th & Independence, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-1400. The appeal must be received by this office within 45 days of the date of this letter and the phrase "FOIA Appeal" should be placed in capital letters on the front of the envelope containing the appeal.

We hope this information is helpful.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Stasia Hutchison".

STASIA A.M. HUTCHISON  
Freedom of Information Act  
Coordinator

Enclosures



USDA/ARS/PWA/IBC Minutes

Meeting Held 2/27/04, 9:00 AM USDA/ARS WRRC Conference Room 5.  
Closed Meeting

In attendance:

William R. Belknap, Chairman  
Kent F. McCue, Secretary  
Bruce C. Campbell  
Olin D. Anderson  
William Hurkman

Major Motions

Approve Registration: w/h USDA/ARS/PWA/PBARC  
Approve Registration: w/h USDA/ARS/PWA/WRRC/PFR  
Approve Registration: w/h USDA/ARS/SJVASC  
Approve Registration: w/h USDA/ARS/PWA/CIPR

Motions Approved:

Approve Registration: w/h (IBC Identification No.: 2-04-1),  
USDA/ARS/PWA/PBARC  
Assessed Biosafety Level: BL1

Approve Registration: w/h (IBC Identification No.: 1-04-1),  
USDA/ARS/PWA/WRRC/PFR  
Assessed Biosafety Level: BL1

Approve Registration: w/h (IBC Identification No.: 4-02-2),  
USDA/ARS/SJVASC  
Assessed Biosafety Level: BL1

Approve Registration: w/h (IBC Identification No.: 4-02-1),  
USDA/ARS/PWA/CIPR  
Assessed Biosafety Level: BL1

Time of Adjournment: 11:00 AM

USDA/ARS/PWA/IBC Meeting  
7/22/04, USDA/ARS WRRC Conference Room 5.

Meeting Called to Order: 9:38 AM

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In attendance:

William R. Belknap, Chairman  
Kent F. McCue, Secretary  
Bruce C. Campbell  
Thomas A. McKeon  
William Miller  
Tamas Torok  
Michael J. Janda  
David A. Palmer

Major Motions

1. Minutes of 2/27/04 USDA/ARS/PWA/IBC meeting approved by committee.
2. Approval of Registration *w/h* USDA/ARS/PWA/WRRC/GGD

Assigned IBC Identification No.: 7-04-1

Assessed Biosafety Containment Level: BL1-P

Approved Motion: Committee unanimously approves issuance of provisional certification. Final certification to be issued by Chair following review by entire committee of addendum to be filed by applicant. Addendum to contain:

- 1) An abstract elaborating the goals of the project.
- 2) A catalog of microbial, plant and insect genes to be introduced, including gene sources. Please indicate if all bacterial genes will be derived from *E. coli K12* derivatives.
- 3) Biosafety training records of laboratory personnel.
- 4) Method of disposal of glasshouse material.
- 5) Indication of how often spore strips are run for routine autoclave monitoring.

3. Approval of Registration *w/h* USDA/ARS/PWA/WRRC/PMR

Assigned IBC Identification No.: 7-04-2

Assessed Biosafety Containment Level: BL1

Approved Motion: Committee unanimously approves issuance of provisional certification. Final certification to be issued by Chair following review by entire committee of addendum to be filed by applicant. Addendum to contain:

- 1) Indication of the maximum aflatoxin/ochratoxin levels expected in culture media.
- 2) Indication that culture volumes will be less than 10 liters.
- 3) Clarification of whether mutagenesis of *A. flavus* is planned? If so, include an abstract indicating the goals of these experiments.

4. Approval of Registration *w/h* USDA/ARS/PWA/WRRC/PSM

Assigned IBC Identification No.: 7-04-3

Assessed Biosafety Containment Level: BL2

Approved Motion: Committee unanimously approves issuance of provisional certification. Final certification to be issued by Chair following review by entire committee of addendum to be filed by applicant and laboratory inspection by Dr. Janda of the committee to ensure compliance with CDC BSL-2 checklist.

Addendum to contain:

- 1) Clarification of security of the -80°C freezer used for long term storage.
- 2) Indication of protocols which are in place to ensure staff safety (recent training of laboratory personnel)
- 3) Indication that protocols are in place for spill inactivation. Please submit protocol for *Salmonella typhi* spill inactivation as part of the addendum.
- 4) Indication of posting of RG2 pathogens in use in each laboratory.
- 5) Training records of personnel and give a brief description of current staff training program.
- 6) Provide detail of *w/h* safety training since 1994.
- 7) Indication that growth chambers *w/h* are isolated from pathogens. Indication of whether there are any growth chambers on the *w/h* and if so that they are similarly isolated.

8) Provide a brief description of the goal of the Norwalk Virus expression research.

5. Approval of Updated USDA/ARS/PWA/IBC Registration Form

Motion tabled. Updated Registration Form to be revised by Chair and re-submitted to committee.

6. Approval of Transgenic Plant Field Releases by committee Chair if USDA/APHIS applications and Notification Numbers are supplied to committee.

Approved Motion: Committee unanimously approves issuance of certification for APHIS-approved field releases by committee Chair.

Meeting Adjourned: 11:48 AM



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**USDA/ARS/PWA/IBC Meeting  
November 9, 2006, USDA/ARS WRRRC WAB Madrone Room**

**Meeting called to order at: 1:30 PM**

**In attendance:**

Robert Mandrell, Chair  
Diana Chao  
Thomas McKeon  
William Miller  
Tamas Torok  
Olin Andersen (by telephone, in conference)

**Major motions**

**1. Provisional Approval of Registration for ~~USDA/ARS/PWA/PBARC~~ USDA/ARS/PWA/PBARC**

Assigned IBC Identification No.: 11-06-1

Assessed Biosafety Containment Level: BL1-P

Approved Motion: Committee unanimously approves issuance of provisional certification. Final certification to be issued by Chair following review by entire committee of addendum to be filed by applicant. Addendum to contain:

- 1) Training in biosafety of additional personnel
- 2) Assurance that standard practices are being followed, i.e. no food/drink, no mouth pipetting, sharps containers, biohazard signs.
- 3) Safety equipment: Indication of decontamination.
- 4) Facilities: handwashing equipment, air handling exchange.

**2. Approval of Registration ~~USDA/ARS/PWA/WCRL~~ USDA/ARS/PWA/WCRL**

Assigned IBC Identification No.: 11-06-2

Assessed Biosafety Containment Level: BL1-P

Approved Motion: Committee unanimously approves issuance of certification.

**3. Updated Approval of Registration ~~USDA/ARS/PWA/WRRRC/PSMRU~~ USDA/ARS/PWA/WRRRC/PSMRU**

*ds*

**Western Regional Research Center –PWA Institutional Biosafety Committee**

800 Buchanan Street • Albany, CA 94710-1105

Robert Mandrell, Ph.D., Chair. Voice: 510.559.8829 • Fax: 510.559.8165 • E-mail: mandrell@pw.usda.gov  
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**IBC Identification No.: 7-04-3**

**Assessed Biosafety Containment Level: BL2**

**Approved Motion: Committee unanimously approves issuance of provisional certification. Final certification to be issued by Chair following additional minor details to be filed by applicant. Addendum to contain:**

- 1) Provide details on decontamination of liquids (broths).
- 2) Provide clarification of method of introduction of bacteria to plants.
- 3) Provide documentation that labs are BSL2 qualified.
- 4) List PPE (goggles, gloves, etc).
- 5) Clarify the strains to be used in studies related to registration information.

4. Recommended request for further information for application from *w/h*  
USDA/ARS/PWA/NSGGRF

- 1) Request complete application
- 2) Provide details regarding experiments needed.

5. Recommended request for further information for application from *w/h*  
USDA/ARS/PWA/Sallnas.

- 1) How many plants (volume) will be is used.
- 2) Clarify the transformation process; provide a diagram with vectors and hosts.
- 3) Describe the experimental procedures with more details.

6. Recommended request for further information for application from *w/h*  
USDA/ARS/PWA/WRRC/FCRU.

- 1) Make one application from the three applications submitted. Each section can have multiple experiments clarified, and answers appropriate to the sections of the application.
- 2) Does the vendor provide any certification for the transgenic animals being purchased?
- 3) Provide more details about waste disposal of animals, cell lines and cloning experiment waste.
- 4) Clarify why spontaneous mutations of Prnp are not a concern?
- 5) Assure that the PI is experienced in these experiments and/or through collaboration with an experienced lab. Has the PI received any guidance or training in the appropriate methods and containment for conduction these experiments? Is the PI the person responsible for training each of the staff who will be working on these experiments?
- 6) Specify the locations where the cloning and transformation work with Prnp work will occur. The IBC expressed concern about these experiments, recommending that the PI and other researchers should be extra cautious about where all experiments with Prnp in vectors, cell lines or heterologous species are conducted.
- 7) Provide details about mammalian cell lines to be used and why these cell lines were chosen. Provide names of cell lines to be transformed and species origin and what is being transformed into them.
- 8) Provide details about "animal pathogens" to be used. Are these bacterial or other microorganisms?



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- 9) Provide APHIS certificate listing this information; it can be part of the registration to the IBC.
  - 10) Provide more details about all of the animal experiments so that the IBC can determine potential risks.
7. Updated Approval of Registration w/ USDA/ARS/PWA/Parlier.  
IBC Identification No.: 4-02-2  
Assessed Biosafety Containment Level: BL1  
Approved Motion: Committee unanimously approves issuance of certification.  
1) Ask former IBC Chair (WB) for original application.
8. Approval of Registration of w/ USDA/ARS/PWA/WRRC/FCRU  
  
IBC Identification No.: 8-06-1  
Assessed Biosafety Containment Level: BL2  
Approved Motion: Committee unanimously approves issuance of certification.
9. Updated Approval of Registration w/ USDA/ARS/PWA/Salinas.  
IBC Identification No.: 4-95-5  
Assessed Biosafety Containment Level: BL1
10. Recommend updated USDA/ARS/PWA/IBC Registration Form  
  
1) Add request for Title of project  
2) Add request for Fax number

**Meeting Adjourned: 3:30 PM**



**Western Regional Research Center -PWA Institutional Biosafety Committee**

800 Buchanan Street • Albany, CA 94710-1105

Robert Mandrell, Ph.D., Chair. Voice: 510.559.5829 • Fax: 510.559.6166 • E-mail: mandrell@pw.usda.gov

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