



## 9.2 Acquiring Organs, Tissues or Materials from Animals by Scavenging

Scavenging is when tissues are harvested from animals where the sample was collected after death for another reason or from a partial sample collected for another purpose e.g. an unused part of a blood sample taken for clinical purposes. The animal has not been killed for the purpose of obtaining these materials. This includes materials gathered from road kill, abattoirs, butchers or supermarkets, partial pathology specimens or tissues from animals killed for another project or from the Biobank. Approval to scavenge by the AEC is not a legislative requirement, however, the AEC must be informed when an investigator or teacher is scavenging, especially if this is occurring on a regular basis. Investigators are required to inform the AEC promptly by email letter.

### Notification of use of Scavenged Tissue

The Code<sup>1</sup> encourages the sharing between researchers of tissues from deceased animals for in vitro work, training or method development; such use is not regulated by the Code or the Act.

Nevertheless, it is an Institutional requirement that such use be documented and reported to the AEC by way of the “Notification of Use of Tissue Scavenged” report.

Dissection of cadavers or organs is required for some tertiary teaching courses. Such use is not regulated by the Code or the Act. Nevertheless, it is an Institutional requirement that such use be documented and reported to the AEC by way of the “Notification of Use of Tissue Scavenged” report.

The use of scavenged tissue is subject to the following provisos:

- The opportunity for collecting scavenged tissue must not influence the breeding of animals nor the time or manner of humane killing of animals.
- The collection of organs, tissues, materials or substances from living animals involved in research, teaching and experimentation is a scientific procedure requiring a full application to the AEC. If a partial sample gained for another purpose is used without being specifically collected then this is considered scavenging.
- Scavenging does not cover animals being bred nor killed specifically to obtain carcasses, organs, tissues, materials or substances; this is a scientific procedure requiring a full application to the AEC.

Notification of the use of scavenged tissue must be submitted to the AEC prior to such use, or on the day of such use should tissues become unexpectedly available, in order to allow the AES to obtain recommendation from the AWO to determine if the collection and use requires AEC or other approval.

---

<sup>1</sup> National Health and Medical Research Council (2013) Australian code for the care and use of animals for scientific purposes, 8th edition. Canberra: National Health and Medical Research, Section 1, Paragraph 1.26, p. 11.



Tissues that have been processed for commercial use (e.g. obtained from a butcher, supermarket or abattoir) do not require AEC Notification.

Scavenged tissue notifications can be acknowledged by the Executive.

**Additional considerations to scavenging**

- When researchers are scavenging tissue from privately owned animals or Veterinary Clinics, written consent of the owner of the animal must be obtained.
- Researchers obtaining tissues (including eggs, hair and feathers) collected from living or dead native wildlife (including road kill) require a wildlife permit from the DEW.
- If animal or human tissues, including cell lines, are imported from overseas then additional permits are very likely to be required prior to importation and may be subject to quarantine regulations.