Adult animals may lose weight on some diets and/or protocols. However, the extent and rate of weight loss should not compromise the health and well-being of the animal. Project Directors should describe the approximate weight and age at which anticipated weight loss will begin and the point at which the study or animal will be terminated. For young growing animals, excessive weight loss for all species must be justified.

When determining an acceptable weight range for animals obtained from commercial vendors, or their offspring, charts and tables provided by the vendor should be used for guidance. Guidance on weight loss in rodents and rabbits has been published to assist in assessing and avoiding severe consequences during scientific procedures.\(^1\) Obesity is a consequence of some protocols and the extent of weight gain should be considered relative to the length of the study, age and species of the animal. Excessive weight gain must be justified.

\(^1\) Jones, Oates, Trussell. (1998) an applied approach to the assessment of severity. Humane Endpoints in Animal Experiments for Biomedical Research