

The University of Ottawa Axolotl Colony

The U. of O. Colony was established in 1973 with stock obtained from Drs. Louis DeLanney and Clark Dalton and from the Indiana Colony. In 1978, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada agreed to support the colony as a "genetic resource" and the Colony grew to its present size of about 250 breeding-age animals and a variable but substantial number of juveniles, larvae and embryos. Our objectives were to act as the primary supplier of embryos and sometimes older animals to Canadian researchers and to also act as a repository for some of the mutant stocks. To that end we carry stocks of the four colour markers (a, ax, d and m) and several of the developmental lethals, though of those only c, p and t are carried in reasonable numbers. Most of our animals have also been characterized for the isozyme markers phosphoglucomutase (Pgm) and one of the soluble esterases (Est-3).

We will meet all reasonable requests from within Canada, asking only that the shipping costs be paid. We have filled some requests from the U.S., but prefer not to do this often as we would only be duplicating the functions of the Indiana Colony, and the status of the axolotl as an endangered species results in considerable paperwork when shipping across the border. Requests should be addressed to myself or Mr. William Fletcher.

As most requests have been for wild-type animals, at least with respect to the developmental mutations, we have been working on producing several lines of genetically uniform animals using the techniques we have developed for making uniparental animals. Many of the homozygous uniparental animals are not good breeders, so we are probably still a year or two from our goal. For our own purposes we were thinking of crossing two such lines to get a heterozygous but genetically uniform line hopefully with some "hybrid vigor". If others would find the genetic equivalent of an inbred line useful, please let us know. We could use some encouragement!

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