

## SACRIFICE OF ADULT HEN (FOR BLOOD)

### **Materials:**

- 1 c.c. syringes with 25g or 27g needle.
- Fresh razor blade or scalpel
- Sodium pentobarbital (1g/ml)
- NKM containing 0.5-1.0 mg/ml heparin
  - (NKM = 130 mM NaCl
  - 5.2 mM KCl
  - 7.5 mM MgCl<sub>2</sub>)
- Ring stand with small ring
- Body bag
- Two or three extra people to help

### **Procedure:**

Lay the chicken down on the table on its side. Hold down its head, legs and body so it can't move. Hold the wing out from its body so that its wing veins are accessible. Using a 1 c.c. syringe, inject approximately one ml of pentobarbital into the vein (the vein may become easier to see if the skin is wetted with 70% ethanol). The chicken should become immediately unconscious and all of its muscle tone should be gone.

Now remove all the feathers from the chicken's neck (if the chicken has been properly anesthetized, this should not bother it). Grab the chicken by the legs and hold it upside down with its head through the ring on the ringstand such that its "shoulders" are resting on the ring (this will reduce the arm fatigue of the person holding the chicken).

Pour 40-50 ml of NKM/heparin into a small (~200 ml) beaker. Now dissect away the skin on the chicken's neck so that its jugular vein is clearly visible. Using a swift, sure stroke of the razor blade or scalpel, make a clean incision in the jugular vein (a vertical cut that penetrates only one wall of the vein is best). The blood should now gush forth, so take care not to get any on your face or clothes. Collect the flowing blood stream into the NKM. The NKM/blood mixture should be swirled occasionally in order to keep it well mixed. Also, make sure that the chicken's head is held away from the beaker, if it vomits you do not want the blood contaminated. As the blood flow begins to slow down, squeeze the chicken's torso rhythmically to get out all the blood you can. After you have collected all the blood you can, put the blood on ice and the carcass into the body bag. The bagged body should go into the "dead animal" freezer.

### **Comments:**

- i. The yield should be ~30-60 ml of blood (approximately 10 ml of blood per pound of chicken).
- ii. If feathers or other extraneous material falls into the blood, you may wish to filter the blood over gauze.
- iii. If the chicken is starved for about 12 hours before sacrifice, it won't vomit so much.