



Colorado State University

FACT SHEET

CHIROPTEREAN (BAT) RESEARCH FACILITY

CSU is home to internationally recognized research that protects people from infectious diseases, including pathogens spread by animals such as bats, which are natural carriers of coronaviruses and other pathogens

CSU plans to build a new enclosure for bats

The new CSU [bat facility](#) will be a 14,000-square-foot enclosure for a breeding colony of bats used for research. When completed in late 2024, it will be used to study bat physiology, viruses and environmental conditions. Location: Adjacent to the Judson Harper Research Complex at the Foothills Research Campus in Fort Collins, Colorado.

Bat research is needed to protect public health

Hundreds of SARS-related coronaviruses occur in bats, yet scientists know little about them. They know diseases can jump from bats to people, and this is the [likely cause of the COVID-19 pandemic](#). Bats are linked to SARS-CoV-2, MERS-CoV, rabies, Ebola virus, Nipah virus and Marburg virus, among other pathogens. Discoveries can lead to new approaches for public health protection. CSU already studies Jamaican fruit bats in highly safeguarded facilities.



CSU has a proven track record in research safety

Our scientists have safely studied bats and other vectors for more than 30 years – the reason the National Institutes of Health chose CSU for this facility. The university must follow federal regulations for laboratory animal care, including the Animal Welfare Act and the Association for Assessment and Accreditation of Laboratory Animal Care.

CSU is a leading research institution

The university is a [top-tier national research university](#), home to more than 1,500 researchers and \$457 million in annual sponsored project expenditures. It's a top-ranked university for solving the COVID-19 crisis. It works closely with state, local, federal agencies and other universities to [prevent pandemics](#).

CSU does not enhance viruses for research

Certain [gain-of-function experiments](#) may pose safety and security concerns. CSU has no plans to conduct gain-of-function research of concern. Our oversight routinely searches for ways to reduce and mitigate risk.

Research must include various bat species

Today, Jamaican fruit bats are studied at the CSU [Center for Vector-borne and Infectious Diseases](#). The new bat facility will house Indian flying fox, house horseshoe bats and, potentially, the big brown bat or Seba's short-tailed bat.

The new facility is well designed

The design follows the Association of Zoos and Aquariums specifications for bat enclosures -- among the highest animal care standards in the world. It will hold about 400 bats. It will follow NIH safety and handling guidelines. It will have controlled access, biosafety and security measures as well as roosting and flight space for bats. It is planned for LEED Gold status.



Artist's rendering of the new research facility

CSU discloses its research findings

Researchers conduct studies and report their findings, as required when contracting with the NIH. Research is peer-reviewed by other experts and published in leading journals for the public and scientific community. CSU believes in full transparency and academic integrity.

CSU Biosafety Office website: <https://www.research.colostate.edu/bs/>

