Estrogen-resistant
strains of mice show
normal sperm matura-
tion following expo-
sure to high (40pg)
doses of estrogen.
Note mature elon-
gated spermatids
(nearly mature sperm)
in the center of this
seminiferous tubule.

Tahoe research partnership created

A historic partnership has been reached among research institutions and local and federal agencies to advance research in the Lake Tahoe basin.
The new agreement is intended to help re-searchers and agencies work together to pre-serve and restore the Sierra Nevada crown jewel. While much is known about the increas-ing algal growth, declining clarity and influ-ences of development on the lake’s watershed, further coordinated scientific inquiry into such areas as watershed repair and air quality is vi-tal, say agreement co-signers.
The memorandum of under-
standing between the Tahoe
Regional Planning Agency and
a host of federal agencies and
research institutions will coor-
dinate the collection and shar-
ing of data.
Those signing the memo-
randum with the Tahoe Re-
gional Planning Agency in-
clude UC Davis; U.S.
Geological Survey; University
of Nevada, Reno; Desert Re-
search Institute; and the U.S.
Forest Service Pacific South-
west Research Station.

A Estrogen-sensitive
strains of mice
showed disruption of
testicular develop-
ment and sperm
maturation by even
the lowest doses of
estrogen (2.5~). Note
the small, disrupted
seminiferous tubules
lacking elongated
spermatids.

Variation in estrogen
sensitivity may mask
endocrine disruption

Genetically different strains of
laboratory mice vary dramatically in their sensi-tivity to estrogen, report UC Davis researchers in the Aug. 20 issue of the journal Science.
The findings by reproductive geneticist Jimmy Spearow and reproductive endocrinolo-gist Marylynn Barkley call into question the va-lidity of current laboratory-animal-based safety tests of estrogenlike chemicals and suggest that an individual’s genetic makeup should be con-sidered when prescribing estrogen and related hormones for medical purposes.
The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is preparing to screen thousands of pesticides and industrial chemicals for several endocrine-disrupting effects. Previous studies have indi-

cated that estrogenlike endocrine disruptors found in the environment can cause decreased sperm counts, deformed genitals, aberrant mat-ing behavior and sterility in wildlife.

Moms pass defensive vigor to offspring

Mothers who have faced adversity produce kids who are physically better equipped to deal with the hardships of life, suggests a study by a UC Davis researcher.
Examining wild radish plants and the water flea Daphnia, ecologist Anurag Agrawal and colleagues found that defensive responses trig-gered in both species by their respective preda-tors were passed on to the offspring, even though the young were not under attack.

fenses is reported in the Sept. 2 issue of the journal Nature.

ways in which insect pests are managed in crops grown for seed production, Agrawal noted. For example, seeds produced by plants that were heavily sprayed with pesticides to