



Livestock Euthanasia

DR. SUE BURLATSCHENKO

GOSHEN RIDGE VETERINARY SERVICES

Livestock Euthanasia

This project began thanks to students at Ridgetown College

I taught an Animal Health course there for years
one lecture included euthanasia of livestock

The students asked me where they could find training courses as other employees (or producers themselves) wanted to take one

- ▶ There weren't any courses being taught in the industry

Livestock Euthanasia

- ▶ There is limited training in the field – usually done on-farm: producers training own employees
- ▶ Confusion exists regarding euthanasia options and at what size of animal
- ▶ Confusion exists over correct use of captive bolt gun
 - ▶ - can easily buy on line but instructions are unclear
- ▶ Therefore a knowledge gap exists in our industry

Livestock Euthanasia

- ▶ Therefore I decided to apply for a CAP funding round to create two captive bolt euthanasia courses:
 - ▶ - swine
 - ▶ - bovine



Livestock Euthanasia

- ▶ Had support and financial contributions from:
 - ▶ DFO
 - ▶ Beef Farmers of Ontario
 - ▶ Veal Farmers of Ontario
 - ▶ Ontario Pork
- ▶ The various commodity groups also recognize the knowledge and training gap in on-farm euthanasia

Livestock Euthanasia

- ▶ Had a team of 3 other bovine veterinarians to build the bovine course
 - ▶ - included OVC veterinarian
 - ▶ - Bovine vet with masters in animal welfare
 - ▶ - Vet with extensive experience in practice and in teaching at different veterinary colleges
- ▶ Took about 12 months to put the two courses together

Livestock Euthanasia

- ▶ This is a hands-on course
- ▶ Euthanasia of livestock should not be initially taught by video
- ▶ Objectives of course:
 - ▶ Discuss mental health aspects of euthanasia – not everyone can perform this duty OR can do it every day
 - ▶ Discuss Codes of Practice – Euthanasia
 - ▶ Discuss concussion; penetrating captive bolt vs non-penetrating
 - ▶ Target site
 - ▶ Safety of operator
 - ▶ Determination of death

Livestock Euthanasia

Acceptable Methods of Swine Euthanasia

| Acceptable Swine Euthanasia | Suckling | Nursery | Grow/ Finish | Mature | Initial Cost | Ongoing Cost | Skill | Constraints |
|--------------------------------|----------|---------|--------------|--------|--------------|--------------|-------|--|
| Veterinary Anesthetic Overdose | ✓ | ✓ | | | H | H | H | Requires veterinary oversight and proper carcass disposal |
| Controlled blunt force Trauma* | ✓ | ✓ | | | N | N | M | Optimal for small pigs <9kg only. Bring the tool to the pig, not vice-versa.** |
| Gas – CO2 or Co2/N2 mix | ✓ | ✓ | | | L | L | M | CO2 for pigs up to 32 kg; N2/CO2 mix not commercialized yet |
| Non Penetrating Captive Bolt | | | ✓ | ✓ | M | M | M | Optimal for small pigs up to 9 kg only |
| Penetrating Captive Bolt | | | ✓ | ✓ | M | M | M | Appropriate charge for size of pig; second shot for pigs >120 kg Optimal pigs >9 kg |
| Gun shot | | | ✓ | ✓ | M | M | M/H | Firearm usage Optimal for pigs >9 kg |

L: Low M: Medium H: High

Adapted from: <https://www.farmfoodcareon.org/farm-animal-care/resources/>

Livestock Euthanasia

- ▶ Most importantly this is an animal welfare issue
- ▶ CPE requires producer SOP for euthanasia to be developed in conjunction with their veterinarian
- ▶ Important to have the conversation with producers



Livestock Euthanasia

- ▶ Knowing how to detect compromised animals that need attention
 - ▶ Case studies presented
- ▶ Understanding the need to euthanize a compromised animal NOW (and not leave until later, when likely will forget)
- ▶ Understanding that as caregivers for livestock, we should not allow **unnecessary suffering**

Livestock Euthanasia

Captive Bolt Devices



Key Features:
Product Diagram
Safe Operating Instructions
Cleaning and Maintenance
Trouble Shooting and Servicing
Parts List



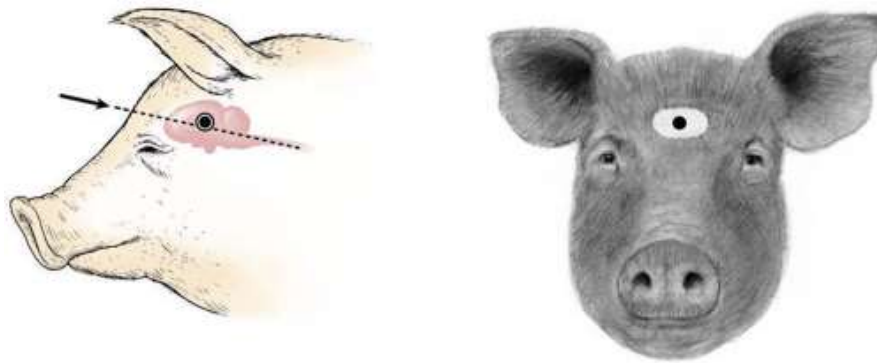
Work with various captive bolt types

Safety aspects

Sizing of charges

Livestock Euthanasia

Penetrating Captive Bolt Placement



About 20 mm or $\frac{3}{4}$ " above the "eyebrows"; flat against the head
*DO NOT aim towards the tail

For right picture: Animal Handling & Audit Guide
For left: testate.edu

Livestock Euthanasia

- ▶ Then the hands-on session



Livestock Euthanasia



Livestock Euthanasia

- ▶ Certificate of completion of course is provided at the conclusion



Livestock Euthanasia

- ▶ This course is flexible:
- ▶ Can deliver mini course on-site in barns (more of a refresher)
- ▶ Designed to teach mass euthanasia (if necessary) for preparation in crisis events
 - ▶ Barn fire
 - ▶ Snow load collapse
 - ▶ FADs

Livestock Euthanasia

- Started delivering courses on-farm during COVID (taking appropriate precautions) and since
- Have delivered courses to industry personnel
- Feedback has indicated that this course is very useful
- Refresher courses now being delivered

Livestock Euthanasia

- ▶ Other resources available on-line:
- ▶ CPC website: Training videos
 - ▶ There is a series of recently developed training videos
 - ▶ Video re: on-farm euthanasia
 - ▶ A good review for producers and staff after the initial hands-on training



Canadian Pork Council
Conseil canadien du porc

Livestock Euthanasia

Thank You!

