

# Humane Euthanasia SOP

Work with your veterinarian to develop a euthanasia action plan for each stage of production on your farm that is consistent with AVMA and AABP guidelines on humane euthanasia.

This plan should be kept in an obvious location in the barn. Review the plan annually with your veterinarian, existing staff, and any new employees when hired.

**Objective:** To minimize pain and suffering by providing a humane and timely death to animals on the farm when necessary

FARM:				
Phase of Production	Euthanasia Method	Alternative Method	Responsible person(s)	Req. Equipment*
Mark the appropriate box (select all that may apply) and fill in the name of the trained individual responsible				
Calves	Gun-shot (GS)	<input type="checkbox"/> Captive Bolt Gun (CBG) <input type="checkbox"/> Veterinarian	GS - CBG - DVM -	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Halter <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Safety Glasses <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ear Plugs
Heifers and Steers	Gun-shot (GS)	<input type="checkbox"/> Captive Bolt Gun (CBG) <input type="checkbox"/> Veterinarian	GS - CBG - DVM -	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Halter <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Safety Glasses <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ear Plugs
Mature Cows	Gun-shot (GS)	<input type="checkbox"/> Captive Bolt Gun (CBG) <input type="checkbox"/> Veterinarian	GS - CBG - DVM-	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Halter <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Safety Glasses <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ear Plugs
Bulls	Gun-shot (GS)	<input type="checkbox"/> Captive Bolt Gun (CBG) <input type="checkbox"/> Veterinarian	GS - CBG - DVM-	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Halter <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Safety Glasses <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ear Plugs

\* Required equipment includes use of either fire-arm or captive bolt gun

## Required Skills:

- ✓ Specific Training by herd veterinarian or Dairy Manager in use and care of equipment
- ✓ Proper animal handling & Ability to correctly apply halter and proper restraint

## Important Telephone Numbers:

### 1. Veterinarian (DVM):

DVM Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

After hours emergency # \_\_\_\_\_

### 2. Deadstock Removal (consistent with local regulations):

Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Adapted from: NYSCHAP  
 Gerrit Rietveld - Animal Care Specialist/OMAF  
 Iowa State University Extension- Procedures for Humane Euthanasia

Veterinarian of Record Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Dean Foods or its affiliates are not responsible for any property damage, injury or death which results from the use of the Captive Bolt Gun or any other equipment used in this Euthanasia Action Plan.

- The captive bolt or gunshot should penetrate the skull at the intersection of lines extending from the lower base of each side of the horn bed to the outside corner of the opposite eye as shown in Figure 1.

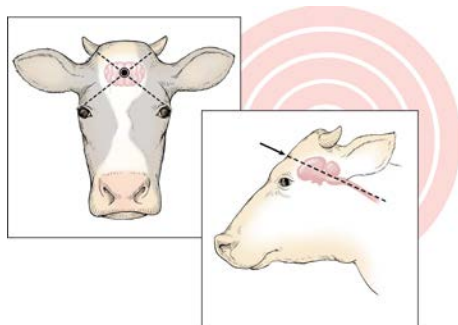


Figure 1. Target site and penetration angle for euthanasia of cattle (from <http://vetmed.iastate.edu/HumaneEuthanasia>)

## Euthanasia

1. Once an animal has been identified for euthanasia, \_\_\_\_\_ (person responsible for performing euthanasia) will be notified.
2. Apply a halter and secure head restraint to prevent movement of the cow or calf.
3. Choose the appropriate method of euthanasia for the animal according to age and size. A .22 caliber hollow or soft point bullet may be used on young animals. Adult animals require a .22 magnum or larger caliber firearm with a solid point bullet. Alternately, 12, 16, or 20 gauge shotguns loaded with slugs or 2, 4, or 6 birdshot can be used.
4. Ensure all personnel and other animals are out of trajectory areas behind and beside the animal.
5. Aim for the area identified by the "X" in Figure 1.
  - a. Hold a rifle within 2-3 feet of the target and a shotgun within 1-2 yards of the target animal. **Never place the muzzle of the firearm directly on the skull.** Pull the trigger.
  - b. Hold a captive bolt gun directly against the skull of the animal and pull the trigger. Follow up with a secondary step (injection of KCl, pithing or second shot).
6. Confirm death and repeat the procedure if the cow is not immediately rendered unconscious or if death is not confirmed within 5 minutes.

## Confirmation of Death

- It is essential that you confirm the animal's death directly following euthanasia.
- A standing animal should immediately collapse. Its muscles may involuntarily contract, usually for no longer than 20 seconds. After this, it may show some poorly coordinated kicking or paddling movements before the muscles completely relax.
- Check the animal for breathing, heartbeat and blinking response (corneal reflex). There should be none. The eyes should be fixed and dilated. To check the blinking response, touch the surface of the animal's eye (the cornea). Any eye movement or blinking shows sustained or recovering brain activity.
- **If there is any sign of breathing, heartbeat or blinking, repeat the euthanasia method.**

Veterinarian of Record Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_