



## Methods of Euthanasia

The following is a list of acceptable and unacceptable methods of euthanasia of individual animals for use on-farm, as well as methods that are only considered acceptable with the noted conditions. The chart is based on the information that was available at the time of publishing<sup>1</sup>. For any method to be considered acceptable, it must render the animal immediately insensible and the animal must not return to sensibility prior to death. Individuals who euthanize pigs must be trained in the appropriate methods.

Weight of Pig →	< 2.3kg (< 5lbs)	2.3kg to 9kg (5lbs to 19.8lbs)	9kg to 32kg (19.8lbs to 70lbs)	32kg to 68kg (70lbs to 150lbs)	68kg to 120kg (150lbs to 264lbs)	120kg to 200kg (264lbs to 440lbs)	> 200kg (> 440lbs)
Euthanasia Method ↓							
Anesthetic Overdose <sup>2</sup>	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Blunt Trauma	Conditional <sup>3</sup>	Conditional <sup>3</sup>	Unacceptable	Unacceptable	Unacceptable	Unacceptable	Unacceptable
Electrocution	Unacceptable	Conditional <sup>4</sup>	Conditional <sup>4</sup>	Conditional <sup>4</sup>	Unacceptable	Unacceptable	Unacceptable
CO <sub>2</sub> and/ or Argon Inhalation	Conditional <sup>5</sup>	Conditional <sup>5</sup>	Conditional <sup>5</sup>	Unacceptable	Unacceptable	Unacceptable	Unacceptable
Non- Penetrating Captive Bolt	Acceptable <sup>6</sup>	Acceptable <sup>6</sup>	Unacceptable	Unacceptable	Unacceptable	Unacceptable	Unacceptable
Penetrating Captive Bolt <sup>7</sup>	Unacceptable	Unacceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Conditional <sup>8</sup>	Conditional <sup>8</sup>
Gunshot to the Head <sup>9</sup>	Unacceptable	Unacceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

- Further research under the oversight of a regulated research body may result in new, acceptable equipment and/or euthanasia methods that may be developed and become available during the life of this Code.
- Administered under the direction of a licensed veterinarian only.
- Blunt trauma can be administered by grasping the hind legs of the piglet and striking the top of the cranium firmly and deliberately against a flat, hard surface. Alternatively, a sharp, firm blow with a heavy blunt instrument to the top of the head over the brain can be used. Sufficient force should be used to euthanize the piglet in one attempt. Alternative methods should be actively considered to ensure that criteria for euthanasia can be consistently met.
- Electrocution of animals must be performed using properly-maintained, proven effective, purpose-designed equipment only. The electric current must flow through the brain first, resulting in insensibility and then through the heart which results in cardiac arrest. This can occur either simultaneously in one step, or by using a two-step method with electrocution to the head performed first.
- Animals must be heavily sedated before introduction to gases. This form of euthanasia is acceptable only with properly-maintained, proven effective, purpose-designed equipment.
- Non-penetrating captive bolt euthanasia may not be used unless the manufacturer specifies that the equipment is designed for the animal's weight range. A secondary method of euthanasia may be required depending on the type of equipment used, after the animal becomes insensible. For pigs at the heavier end of this weight range, a penetrating captive bolt will be more effective.
- It is critical to ensure proper placement and aim of the penetrating captive bolt since the brain is relatively small and well protected. (45) When using the captive bolt method, the frontal site is the only acceptable location.
- Pigs ≥120kg (≥265lbs) in weight require a secondary method (e.g. reapply the captive bolt, pithing, bleeding) that is performed after the animal becomes insensible.
- Proper placement and aim of the firearm is critical since the brain is relatively small and well protected. Gunshot can be applied to the frontal site, the temporal region, or from behind the ear directed diagonally toward the opposite eye. When performing euthanasia with a firearm, choosing a safe location to ensure that bystanders are safe is critical. All personnel should always be positioned behind the shooter. (45)