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PRESS RELEASE

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HSA technical guidance updated

The Humane Slaughter Association (HSA) has updated its [technical guidance for the on-farm humane killing of neonate pigs, goats and sheep](#).

The updated guidance describes the use of mechanical, non-penetrating captive-bolt devices for the humane killing of neonate pigs, goats and sheep within certain specified parameters. The changes have been made following *The Protection of Animals at the Time of Killing (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2022* coming into force in February 2022 and include details of the animals on which these devices can be used as a killing method, and the minimum kinetic energy that the devices must deliver for each of the species covered.

Charlie Mason, Technical Director for the HSA, said: “Historically, manual blunt-force trauma was commonly used on-farm for emergency killing or routine culling of neonate pigs, goats and sheep. Whilst this technique is effective when properly performed by a trained and competent operator, there are several variables that may impact its effectiveness including the strength and skill of the operator, and the timing and accuracy of the blow.

Current slaughter legislation prohibits the use of manual blunt-force trauma as a stunning or killing method, but it may still have to be used in dire emergencies, for example when movement of the animals, any delay in killing, or a combination of the two, will cause avoidable suffering. Mechanical blunt-force trauma delivers a more controlled percussive blow to the head and does not require the procedure to be followed up with a killing method. This view has been supported by several recent studies that have investigated the effectiveness of these devices for humanely killing neonate animals.”

On-Farm Humane Killing of Neonate Pigs, Goats and Sheep is freely available from the HSA and can be accessed [here](#).

ENDS

Notes to Editors:

Humane Slaughter Association

The HSA is the only charity that works, in the UK and internationally, through educational, scientific and technical advances, exclusively towards the highest worldwide standards of welfare for food animals during transport, marketing and slaughter.

Registered Charity No 1159690 : Charitable Incorporated Organisation



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Images attached: © MFarish SRUC

The Humane Slaughter Association (HSA) is a UK-based, independent Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO). It is the only UK charity concerned exclusively in promoting the humane treatment of all food animals during transport, at market, slaughter, and killing for welfare reasons or disease control.

It works through research, education, training and promoting technical advances to bring real, practical and lasting improvements in food animal welfare.

The HSA is funded by voluntary donations, subscriptions and legacies. For more information about the HSA's work call + 44 (0) 1582 831919, email info@hsa.org.uk or visit www.hsa.org.uk

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