



Euthanasia

Alpaca CheQA

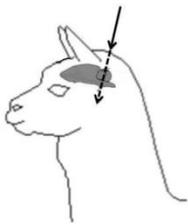
Dr Richard Shephard and Dr Jane Vaughan

The humane killing of an alpaca may be required because of injury or disease. The overriding consideration during euthanasia is to prevent the animal from suffering further pain or distress. Any euthanasia procedure must be humane. Humane killing depends on rapidly inducing unconsciousness and failure of brain function.

Recommended Best Practice

- Devices for killing should be in good condition (e.g. captive bolt kept clean and functional; activators kept cool and dry), and appropriate for the animal (firearm of the appropriate calibre; activator of appropriate strength).
- Persons undertaking the humane slaughter of livestock should be trained and competent.

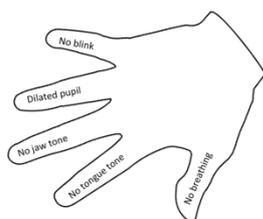
Whenever a firearm is used, the operator must be licensed and competent to use the gun. The storage and use of a captive bolt varies from state to state. Operators must ensure the safety of themselves and nearby people and animals. Handlers who are inexperienced with the procedure should consult a veterinarian.



The correct position of delivery of the captive-bolt or firearm shot is critical for the humane and effective slaughter of animals. In alpacas, the optimum position when using a captive bolt, which must be placed firmly against the skull, is a poll shot rather than a frontal shot. Aim in the midline, through an imaginary line drawn between the horizontal ear canals to ensure the brainstem is disrupted when the bolt is fired (see diagram).

A successful shot is indicated by immediate collapse. If the pupils are not fixed and dilated immediately after delivering the first shot and/or the animal tries to rise or vocalise, a second shot should be delivered through a separate hole to ensure the brainstem is disrupted. If the second shot fails to elicit fixed and dilated pupils, the animal should be pithed through one of the bolt/bullet entry holes in the skull so that the brainstem is macerated.

A five-finger head check, ideally wearing gloves, must be performed to confirm death 5 minutes after use of captive bolt or firearm to ensure the animal is dead and not just stunned and regaining consciousness. The following list should be read aloud to assist confirmation:



1. No blink
1. Fixed dilated pupil
2. No jaw tone
3. No tongue tone
4. No breathing (check air coming from nostrils and chest movement)