

EVALUATING EMERGENCY EUTHANASIA OR DEPOPULATION of livestock and poultry

Euthanasia or depopulation, from a systems perspective, includes consideration of pre-euthanasia or pre-depopulation animal handling, the characteristics of various euthanasia or depopulation techniques, and issues around the disposal of remains.

What are some things I need to think about?

- Have I been provided with full information as to why euthanasia/depopulation may be necessary?
- Have I gathered the information I need regarding all the aspects of the process (i.e., handling considerations, techniques, remains disposal) so that I can make a fully informed decision as to best approach?

Have all alternatives to euthanasia or depopulation been explored?

- Can animals be moved to a different slaughter facility?
- Can animals be held on-farm longer without significant negative impact to animal health and welfare?

Do I have a conflict of duties among client, patient, other stakeholders, and public health?

- What are my professional obligations and my ethical commitments?

Can euthanasia methods be applied to this situation? Which method is most acceptable?

See the [AVMA Guidelines for the Euthanasia of Animals](#)

IF NO

If euthanasia methods cannot be applied in this situation, can a “preferred” method of depopulation be used?

See the [AVMA Guidelines for the Depopulation of Animals](#)

IF NO

If “preferred” methods of depopulation cannot be applied, can a “permitted in constrained circumstances” method be used?

See the [AVMA Guidelines for the Depopulation of Animals](#)

IF NO

If “permitted in constrained circumstances” methods of depopulation cannot be applied, can a “not recommended” method be used?*

See the [AVMA Guidelines for the Depopulation of Animals](#)

Other concerns

- Have I considered the worst-case scenario and endeavored to avoid it?
- Have I considered the best-case scenario and endeavored to achieve it?
- How will carcasses be disposed of following the applied technique? **

* In circumstances that are not clearly covered by the [AVMA Guidelines for the Depopulation of Animals](#), a veterinarian experienced with the species in question should apply professional judgment and knowledge of clinically acceptable techniques in selecting a method of depopulation or euthanasia (if required).

** State and federal agencies that include animal health officials and environmental officials, working collaboratively with the owners of the animals, determine the best carcass management options.