

New Euthanasia Device for Piglets Now Commercially Available

A new device developed by the University of Guelph to provide humane euthanasia to piglets is now commercially available. The Zephyr E, developed at the University of Guelph, is a non-penetrating captive bolt device, used to deliver pain and stress free euthanasia to piglets. Testing of the device, conducted on behalf of the U.S. based National Pork Board and Swine Innovation Porc on 100 neonatal piglets and 150 nursery piglets has shown the device to be 100 percent effective. A commercialized version of the Zephyr E is now being manufactured and distributed by Philipsburg, Pennsylvania based Bock Industries. Dr. Tina Widowski, a professor of animal and poultry science and the director of the Campbell Centre for Animal Welfare at the University of Guelph, says testing involved multiple stock people and the response has been positive.

Clip-Dr. Tina Widowski-University of Guelph: The stock people like it, particularly those who have had experience with the more traditional methods for euthanasia. For example, blunt force trauma is one of the most commonly used methods on farms. We have determined that those methods, when applied properly, they're esthetically objectionable, they get some bad press sometimes but we know if delivered properly they're humane but they're hard to do, hard for the person to do, hard to look at. People with experience with that have generally taken to the Zephyr E very well. They've wanted to know if and when they would be able to use it in larger piglets. A little bit larger piglets are difficult to do, there aren't a lot of options available for them. We did an informal survey on some of those stock people and all of them rated very highly and we've gotten a lot of interest. Any of the research stations where we've done it at, they wanted to keep it for their own so we've left it with them.

For more information on the Zephyr E visit the Farm and Food Care Ontario web site at farmfoodcare.org or Bock Industries at bock-industries.com.

For Farmscape.Ca, I'm Bruce Cochrane.

*Farmscape is a presentation of Sask Pork and Manitoba Pork Council

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