

Poultry Euthanasia Guidelines: *A Guide for Backyard Poultry Owners*

When should I think about using euthanasia in my flock?

- If a bird is:
 - ⇒ Visibly suffering: excessive weight loss, pain, distress
 - ⇒ Not able to access food or water
 - ⇒ Unlikely to recover
 - ⇒ Not responding to treatment

How do I properly euthanize my poultry/small flock?

- The best method is **CERVICAL DISLOCATION**. This method is:
 - ⇒ Humane when trained properly
 - ⇒ Cost-effective
 - ⇒ **NOT** feasible for larger flocks

How do I determine death?

- When you touch the edge of the bird's eye, the third eyelid **should not** come across the cornea

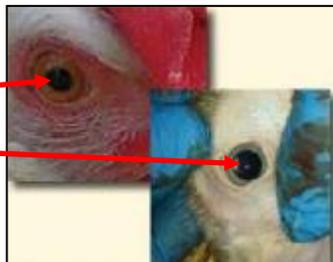
Third eyelid does **NOT** come across cornea, chicken is dead



Third eyelid comes across cornea; this chicken is **NOT** dead

- The pupil (black part of the eye) **should** be completely dilated (very large and round) and not moving anymore

The pupils of both birds are completely dilated (large and round), these birds are dead



- The bird **should not** be trying to or able to raise its head above body level

Head is raised above the body, this chicken is not dead



Head is **NOT** raised above the body, this chicken is dead



What are unacceptable ways of performing euthanasia?

- Drowning, bleeding the bird out, suffocation, vehicle exhaust, freezing, poisons, hitting the bird against a surface

How to do cervical dislocation:



Step 1: Hold bird upside-down above the hocks and securely restrain legs against you



Step 2: Hold the head by placing first two fingers on either side of the neck at the base of the skull, bending the head backwards until it is perpendicular to the back



Step 3: In a single smooth motion, apply increasing force to stretch the neck until the head separates from the cervical spine in the neck

For more information call the Sick Bird Hotline at (866) 922-2473 or visit:

<http://www.poultryindustrycouncil.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/PIC-Practical-Guidelines-for-On-Farm-Euthanasia-of-Poultry.pdf>