Euthanasia tools and the *Raised by a Canadian Farmer* Animal Care Program

Chicken Farmers of Canada (CFC) recognizes that there is a need among chicken farmers to have more options and tools for accomplishing euthanasia. Euthanasia is a critically important task for maintaining the health of a flock and protecting individual bird welfare, one that requires competence and confidence, and one that can be emotionally difficult to perform.

Section 6 of the Animal Care Program (ACP) includes a table of acceptable euthanasia methods and the conditions for their acceptability. Knowing which specific devices meet these conditions is not always clear.

In 2021, CFC established the *Broiler Euthanasia Tools Evaluation Working Group* (WG) to assess commercially available tools for their ability to meet the requirements in the ACP. The WG relied on the advice and guidance from two farmers from the CFC Board of Directors, two veterinarians with poultry and animal welfare expertise, and one provincial auditor. Additionally, an on-farm evaluation of the practicality of the euthanasia tools was conducted by four farmers from different regions of the country. The WG carefully reviewed the scientific information and the on-farm trials; a summary of the findings can be accessed here.

The Zephyr-EXL and NEX devices met the ACP criteria and therefore, were deemed acceptable options. However, the KED was not an acceptable option due to its ability to cause bone crushing, and the extended time to insensibility associated with its use.

Starting January 1st, 2025, there will be a one-year phase-out for the use of the KED euthanasia device. Provincial boards that are not already issuing corrective action requests (CARs) for the use of the KED on farms are required to phase out their use before December 31, 2025. Farmers are encouraged to consult with their veterinarian and other industry advisors to find an alternative that meets the ACP requirements and works for their farm.

For audits taking place after January 1st, 2026, the KED device will not be permitted as an acceptable euthanasia method, and a CAR must be issued if it is used on the farm.

Any questions about this clarification of the ACP requirements can be raised with your provincial board.

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