Animal welfare at slaughter

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Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2026/1734 on the protection of animals at the time of killing as regards the authorisation of non-penetrative captive bolt stunning and nitrogen high expansion foam stunning

What is changing and why?

The European Union has introduced the use of non-penetrative captive bolts for slaughtering:

- piglets up to 5 kg
- lambs and kid goats up to 4.5 kg;

and for stunning before slaughter of:

- piglets between 5 and 10 kg
- lambs and kid goats between 4.5 and 10 kg.

The proposed Regulation sets specific requirements that ensure either death or loss of consciousness of the animal. In particular, it specifies the correct restraining and shooting position of the device on the head of the animal for animal welfare reasons.

EU rules on animal welfare at the time of slaughter also apply to meat imported into the EU. This proposal offers an additional method, ensuring a high level of animal welfare.

Timeline

The Regulation applies from **6 August 2026**.

For more information see the full record on the AGRINFO website – where you can also view the latest AGRINFO Update newsletters and search the database.

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