SMALL RUMINANT EUTHANASIA

NIAA Animal Care Council Panel

Dr. Jim Logan
Wyoming State Veterinarian
**Small Ruminant Euthanasia**

- Euthanasia of small ruminants may be necessary for reasons ranging from traumatic injury to incurable disease to old age.

- Challenges:
  - Remote locations of many sheep operations
  - Availability of veterinarian
  - Practicality of using a veterinarian
WHAT IS APPROPRIATE?

- Depends on:
  - Location
  - Situation
  - Aesthetics
  - Training
  - Diagnostic Needs
  - Disposal Options
“Acceptable Methods”

- Barbiturates & barbituric acid derivatives
- Less attractive euthanasia method in production settings
  - Cost and disposal concerns
  - Availability of a veterinarian to administer the drug
- Injectable barbiturates have the advantage of a rapid and smooth effect if administered correctly.
“Acceptable Methods with Conditions”

- **Gunshot** (with appropriate firearm and ammunition)
  - **Advantages:**
    - Low cost and availability
    - Quick and effective
    - Ability of owner to euthanize without having a veterinarian present
  - **Disadvantages:**
    - Safety issues
    - Aesthetics

- **Captive bolt with exsanguinations or KCI or MgSO4 injection**
  - **Disadvantages:**
    - Aesthetics
    - Slower death
    - Restraint
RECOMMENDED POSITIONING FOR GUNSHOT OR CAPTIVE BOLT PLACEMENT