

HSA Conference 2026: Animal Welfare Beyond the Farm Gate: Latest developments in humane slaughter and transport of animals

20– 21 October 2026

The Catalyst, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, UK and online



Day 1 – Tuesday 20 October 2026

09:00 - 09:30 Registration

09:30 - 09:45 Welcome and introduction

Keynote speaker

09:45 - 10:30 Meghan Barrett, Indiana University Indianapolis, Indiana USA

Welfare at time of killing for farmed insects

10:30 - 11:00 Networking break

11:00 - 11:30 Session 1 - Killing of neonates in emergencies

11:00 - 11:15 David Pritchard, consultant in veterinary and animal welfare science, UK

Rapid Evidence Assessment (REA) on the practical and welfare implications of the use of mechanical blunt force trauma devices to euthanise piglets under 10kg in weight.

11:15 - 11:30 Lesley Jessiman, Scotland's Rural College (SRUC), Scotland

A qualitative analysis of stockperson's knowledge, beliefs, and perceptions of on-farm emergency killing of piglets

11:30 - 12:00 Neonate killing discussion panel

12:00 - 12:55 Session 2 - Automated welfare monitoring

12:00 - 12:15 Ellie Gannon, Harper Adams University, UK

"Abattoir Air Quality: An Unknown Quantity". Volatile Organic Compound Characterisation in Beef Abattoirs

12:15 - 12:35 Noemie Van Noten, Flanders Research Institute for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (ILVO), Belgium

Automated monitoring of pig and broiler chicken welfare during the pre-slaughter and stunning phase

12:35 - 12:55 Anneleen Watteyn, Flanders Research Institute for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (ILVO), Belgium

One year of slaughterhouse-based monitoring reveals the welfare status of spent hens in Flanders

13:00 - 14:00 Lunch and networking

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Day 1 (continued) – Tuesday 20 October 2026

14:00 - 15:00 Session 3 - Poultry slaughter

14:00 - 14:20 Valentina Monistero, Italian National Reference Centre for Animal Welfare, Italy

Survey overview of controlled atmosphere stunning practices and animal welfare assessment in poultry slaughterhouses

14:20 - 14:35 Aranzazu Varvaro Porter, Institute of Agrifood Research and Technology, Spain

Identification of animal welfare concerns during shackling and electrical waterbath stunning of ducks under commercial conditions

14:35 - 14:50 Sarah Lombard, French Agency for Food, Environmental and Occupational Health & Safety (ANSES), France

Assessing state of consciousness after waterbath stunning in ducks: stunning efficiency, and inter-observer repeatability under commercial conditions

14:50 – 15:00 Charlie Mason, Humane Slaughter Association, UK

Waterbath stunning of poultry

15:00 – 15:30 Networking break

15:30 – 17:00 Session 4 - Humane slaughter of aquatic species

15:30 - 15:45 Marianna De Luca, Stazione Zoologica Anton Dohrn, Italy

Neurophysiological Signatures of Stunning in Cephalopods: Toward Humane Slaughtering Practices

15:45 - 16:00 Felicity Wilson, University of Stirling, Scotland

In-Water Batch Stunning of Decapod Crustaceans

16:00 - 16:15 Wasseem Emam, Ethical Seafood Research, UK

Can ice slurry be refined as a humane slaughter method for Nile tilapia (*Oreochromis niloticus*)?

16:15 - 16:30 Jackson Gross, University of California, USA

Balancing Percussive Stunning Effectiveness and Product Presentation in Pirarucu (*Arapaima gigas*) and Emerging Aquaculture Species in Brazil

16:30 - 17:00 Aquatic slaughter discussion panel

17:00 Thank you and close

18:00 Evening Reception - Bealim House, 7-25 Gallowgate, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 4SG

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Day 2 - Wednesday 21 October

09:00 - 09:30 Registration

09:30 - 09:45 Welcome and introduction

09:45 - 11:25 Session 1 – Transport and handling

09:45 – 10:05 Mandeep Singh Azad, SKUAST, India

Improving animal welfare during long-distance livestock transhumant migration through pastoralist training and capacity building

10:05 - 10:25 Luca van Dijk, Aarhus University, Denmark

Feeding in Transit: Welfare Considerations for Unweaned Calves During Long Distance Transport

10:25 - 10:45 Emeline Nogues, Aarhus University, Denmark

Emergency management of overturned trucks transporting pigs: an interview-based case study in France

10:45 – 11:15 Networking break

11:15 - 11:35 Rick Hernandez, Aarhus University, Denmark

Welfare implications of temporary stay durations and resource access for growing pigs at assembly barns

11:35 – 11:55 Marco Facchinetti, CMC Industries, Italy

Automatic loading of broilers for processing: an alternative to manual catching

12:00 – 13:00 Session 2 – Depopulation

12:00 – 12:15 Cia Johnson, American Veterinary Medical Association, USA

Humane Endings: Guidelines for the Depopulation of Animals

12:15 – 12:30 Virginie Michel, ANSES, France

Most appropriate depopulation methods for poultry

12:30 – 13:00 Panel discussion on depopulation

13:00 – 13:50 Lunch and networking

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Day 2 (continued) - Wednesday 21 October

13:50 - 14:30 Session 3 – Slaughter of red meat species

13:50 - 14:10 Enrica Massalin, Eurogroup for Animals, Belgium

Reducing stress and improving animal welfare: the role of mobile slaughter units and policy implications for alternative slaughter methods

14:10 - 14:30 Kate Fletcher, Humane Slaughter Association, UK

International Guidance on Equine Welfare at Slaughter, including in resource-restricted contexts: Publication of guidelines by HSA, RVC, World Horse Welfare

14:30 - 15:00 Networking break

15:00 - 15:55 Session 4 – Religious and non-stun slaughter

15:00 - 15:15 George Eustice, Former Secretary of State at Defra, Penbroath, UK

Promoting and supporting pre-stunned Halal meat

15:15 - 15:35 Troy Gibson, Royal Veterinary College, UK

Behavioural, brainstem and electroencephalographic assessment of the time to loss of consciousness in poultry following non-stunned slaughter

15:35 - 15:55 Jacob Hascalovici, Hackensack Meridian Health, New York

Rapid Loss of Consciousness in Cattle Following Non-Stun Slaughter: Evidence from a Systematic Review

15:55 - 16:15 Thank you and close

Please note, the programme may be subject to minor changes and updates.