



## Media Release

**26<sup>th</sup> February, 2008**  
**For Immediate Release:**

### **Study highlights best practice in group stunning**

A two-year Defra-funded project to determine optimal design and operational parameters for group stunning systems in abattoirs has now been completed by ADAS UK Ltd in collaboration with the Humane Slaughter Association (HSA) and Industrial and Agricultural Engineers Ltd (IAE).

Group stunning, in which a group of animals are brought to a stun pen and stunned individually before being bled, is relatively common, particularly in small to medium-sized, multi-species abattoirs. However, prior to this study there were no guidelines covering the operation of group stunning systems – as was highlighted by the Farm Animal Welfare Council in their 2003 ‘Report on the Welfare of Farmed Animals at Slaughter or Killing: Part 1 Red Meat Animals’.

The study involved gathering information through visits to 40 abattoirs using group stunning, industry consultation and commercial testing of an optimum pen design based on the information and built by IAE. The results were presented at a meeting of the Association of Independent Meat Suppliers (AIMS) in Leeds in November 2007. Best practice guidelines have also been published and these were also launched at the meeting.

The guidelines highlight potential advantages and disadvantages of group stunning systems and how to improve these systems for optimum animal welfare and operating efficiency with best practice recommendations. They are being distributed to all the abattoirs that participated in the study, with further copies available either as a free download from the HSA website ([www.hsa.org.uk](http://www.hsa.org.uk)) or at £1.00 each to cover postage and handling from the HSA. Contact the Humane Slaughter Association, The Old School, Brewhouse Hill, Wheathampstead, Herts AL4 8AN. Telephone 01582 831919, email [info@hsa.org.uk](mailto:info@hsa.org.uk).

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Note to Editors:

### **Humane Slaughter Association**

As an independent registered charity, the HSA is unique in working exclusively to achieve the highest worldwide standards in food animal welfare at markets, during transport and at slaughter through scientific and technical advances, education and training. Its work includes researching, refining and demonstrating humane slaughter methods, publishing material such as guidelines, best practice, books and videos, funding research projects and the development of equipment. Specialist technical staff provide expert and practical advice on all welfare issues relating to food animals.

The HSA is funded by voluntary donations, subscriptions and legacies.

For more information about the HSA's work call 01582 831919, email [info@hsa.org.uk](mailto:info@hsa.org.uk) or visit [www.hsa.org.uk](http://www.hsa.org.uk)

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