STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES – EQUINE

Euthanasia of Horses at Charles Sturt University

Category
Teaching: Category No.3 (Instructor – student ratio 1:1)
Research: Category No.4

Objective
The describe a safe and humane method of euthanasia of horses

Alternatives to animal use
None

Details of Procedure (1) For horses when elective euthanasia is indicated

1. Pre-euthanasia sedation with acetylpromazine (20mg for a 450kg horse)(SOP049)
2. A jugular catheter should be placed and secured (SOP050)
3. The horse will be taken into the anaesthetic induction/recovery room at the Veterinary Clinical Centre and will be calmly restrained by the attendant (groom or veterinary technician)
4. The horse will be additionally secured and restrained by using a crush-gate to restrict movement around the room
5. Heavy sedation will be induced using detomidine (100mg for a 450kg horse) given via the intravenous catheter
6. A concentrated solution (325mg/ml) of pentobarbitone sodium (100ml for a 450kg horse) will be injected via the intravenous catheter as quickly as possible
7. Horses typically sink slowly to the sitting position and then lie quietly on their side
8. The horse’s heart rate and respiratory rate will be monitored until they cease
9. Once pronounced dead, the horse will be transported to the animal disposal pit or the post-mortem examination room

Details of Procedure (2) For horses that are euthanased on the operating table

1. The anaesthesiologist will administer a concentrated solution (325mg/ml) of pentobarbitone sodium solution by intravenous injection (on the operating table) once the owner consent is obtained and the surgeon/internist gives permission
2. Once pronounced dead, the horse will be transported to the animal disposal pit or the post-mortem examination room

Drugs, chemicals or biological agents
Acetylpromazine
Detomidine
Pentobarbitone (Lethabarb)

Impact of procedure on wellbeing of animal or animals
Not applicable
**Reuse and repeated use**

Not applicable

**Care of animals during / after procedure(s)**

**Pain relief measures**

Not applicable

**Qualifications, experience or training necessary to perform this procedure**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demonstrator:</th>
<th>Necessary</th>
<th>Desirable</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Groom</td>
<td>Experience in handling horses</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Vet technician</td>
<td>Animal nursing qualify. Experience in handling horses</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anaesthesiologist</td>
<td>BVMS, BVSc, DVM</td>
<td>Specialty training in veterinary anaesthesiology Experience handling horses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surgeon/Internist</td>
<td>BVMS, BVSc, DVM</td>
<td>Specialty training in veterinary medicine/surgery</td>
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<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>Vet degree program</td>
<td>Anaesthesia rotation</td>
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