

# Humane Slaughter Association



Caring beyond the farm gate

Spring 2024

## Welcome

Welcome to the HSA's Spring Newsletter 2024.

The HSA plays a vital role in promoting the welfare of animals during transport, slaughter and when they must be killed in emergencies. Our work to bring practical and lasting improvements to food animals around the world continues in 2024, with many research projects, events and training sessions underway.

Following the findings of research, jointly funded with DEFRA, into alternatives to high concentration CO<sub>2</sub> for stunning pigs, and with the increased attention placed on the welfare of pigs during CO<sub>2</sub> stunning, we have updated our position on this crucial issue. The HSA hopes for, and expects to see, rapid progress towards replacement of CO<sub>2</sub> with a more humane alternative. We are actively collaborating with the pig sector to ensure this significant welfare challenge is addressed.

As part of our commitment to advancing and promoting the use of humane methods for the transport and killing of farmed animals globally, our Spring Appeal is focused on supporting simple yet highly impactful projects like this one. I hope you will consider supporting us in this aim.

Our HSA team has been busy carrying out welfare assessments and participating at various agricultural shows across the country. Please do come and see us if you happen to be at any of the shows mentioned in our events section below.

None of the vital work we do could happen without the support of our members and donors, so thank you as always for your continued support.



**Dr Huw Golledge**  
Chief Executive

## HSA statement on CO<sub>2</sub> stunning in pigs

The HSA's position regarding the slaughter of all animals is that they should be killed as humanely as possible with every reasonable effort made to reduce pain, suffering and distress to an absolute minimum.

Carbon Dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) is widely used to stun pigs prior to slaughter. However, robust scientific evidence shows that it causes significant animal welfare issues. The HSA view is that a more humane alternative to CO<sub>2</sub> should be adopted as soon as possible.

The HSA co-funded research alongside the UK Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) to test one potentially humane alternative stunning method – Low Atmospheric Pressure Stunning (LAPS). Unfortunately, the research showed that LAPS is not a humane alternative for stunning pigs.

Now that LAPS has been shown not to be the alternative to CO<sub>2</sub> that many had hoped, it is essential that other alternatives are adopted without undue delay.

You can read our statement in full here: [hsa.org.uk/co2](https://hsa.org.uk/co2)

## Spring Appeal 2024

At the end of 2023, we awarded funding of £10,000 to a project aiming to improve chicken welfare during transportation in Malawi.

The project aspires to replace the traditional method of transporting live chickens to markets (suspended upside down from the handlebars of a bicycle in groups of up to 50 birds) with welfare-friendly crates.

500 chicken vendors will receive the crates and associated training. This has the potential to improve the welfare of hundreds of thousands of chickens annually by also empowering those vendors to train others.

This project is one of many supported by the HSA. With your support, the HSA can create lasting and tangible change for food animals all over the world.

To help us improve animal welfare beyond the farm gate, please donate by visiting [hsa.org.uk/springappeal](https://hsa.org.uk/springappeal).



## Humane Slaughter Association

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Registered Charity in England no 1159690: Charitable Incorporated Organisation



## Council News

### 2024 Annual General Meeting

This year's AGM will be held at 6pm (arrive from 5.30pm) on Wednesday 13 November 2024 at the Royal Society in London.

Following the formal business, there will be a series of talks on recent HSA-funded projects and updates from our sister charity, the Universities Federation for Animal Welfare, followed by a drinks reception.

There are limited spaces available for HSA members at this year's AGM. To secure yours, please email: [rspv@hsa.org.uk](mailto:rspv@hsa.org.uk) or write to us at the address listed at the bottom of this page.

### Council changes at the 2023 Annual General Meeting

Dr Jane Downes, Dr Anna Olsson and Dr David Sargan were re-elected to council.

## How you can help

The HSA is a registered, independent charity and membership organisation. We receive no government funding.

We play a vital role in improving animal welfare beyond the farm gate, in markets and collection centres, during transport, and at slaughterhouses. We do this by providing funding and support for essential research and specialised guidance and training to the livestock industry and animal welfare scientists from our in-house experts.

To learn how to support our work, please visit us at [hsa.org.uk/support](https://hsa.org.uk/support)

## The British Pig and Poultry Fair 2024

The HSA team attended the Pig and Poultry Fair at the NEC in Birmingham in May. We had some great conversations with visitors to our stand and it was an excellent opportunity to engage with the industry. We look forward to the 2026 event.

### Grants and Awards

The HSA is committed to improving animal welfare beyond the farm gate through funding impactful research and education initiatives globally.

The HSA offers occasional Special Travel Awards to allow researchers to travel and undertake studies or other activities that may lead to significant developments in the humane treatment of animals during marketing, transport or slaughter.

This year, we provided funding to Dr Han Quang Hanh who is a senior lecturer at the Faculty of Animal Science at Vietnam National University of Agriculture. Dr Hanh received the award to travel to Aarhus University (ANIVET Behaviour, Stress, and Welfare), Denmark to visit Professor Mette S Herskin's research group.

Dr Hanh will learn more about the welfare of animals during transport and at the slaughterhouse which will be significant to the sustainable development of livestock production in Vietnam in the coming years.

## Agricultural show plans 2024

The 2024 show season has been a busy one so far!

Our dedicated team of animal welfare experts will be available at our stand throughout the show season, ready to provide advice and answer any questions you may have.

We will be attending the following shows:

- National Sheep Association (NSA) Sheep 2024 in Worcestershire, 30 July
- English Winter Fair in Staffordshire, 16 - 17 November

For more information, please keep checking our website. We look forward to seeing you there!

## HSA One-Day Seminar: Animal Welfare at Slaughter and Killing — Hot Topics 2023

On Wednesday 18 October 2023, we hosted our one-day seminar: Animal Welfare at Slaughter and Killing — Hot Topics 2023, in Solihull, UK. The seminar brought together 120 international colleagues associated with animal welfare at slaughter and was held in-person to encourage open debate from the attendees.

Delegates heard from a range of speakers covering a variety of topics, including CCTV to monitor animal welfare at slaughter, updates on financial support for small abattoirs and poultry welfare during mass depopulation operations.

### Some participant feedback:

"Very good meeting. Met new contacts and learned a lot!"

"Excellent day. Congratulations to the HSA team!"

