



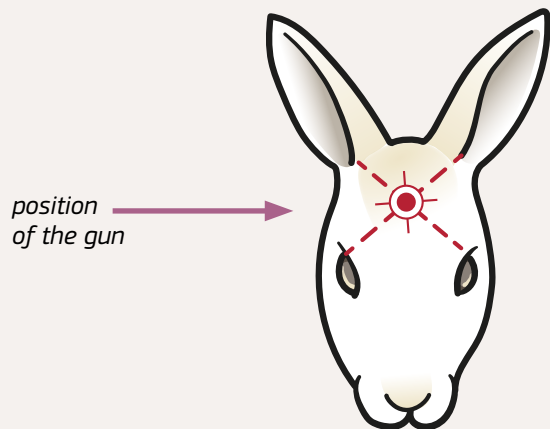
## HOW TO STUN/KILL RABBITS ON-FARM

Rabbits unable to be transported or failing to thrive must be killed on-farm. They may also be killed on-farm to supply meat directly to consumers or retailers. Prior stunning is compulsory in all cases. Stun and kill them **as quickly as possible** so that death is painless. This information does not override **national rules** that forbid or restrict any of these practices.

*Stunning and killing must be carried out by workers with an appropriate level of competence.*

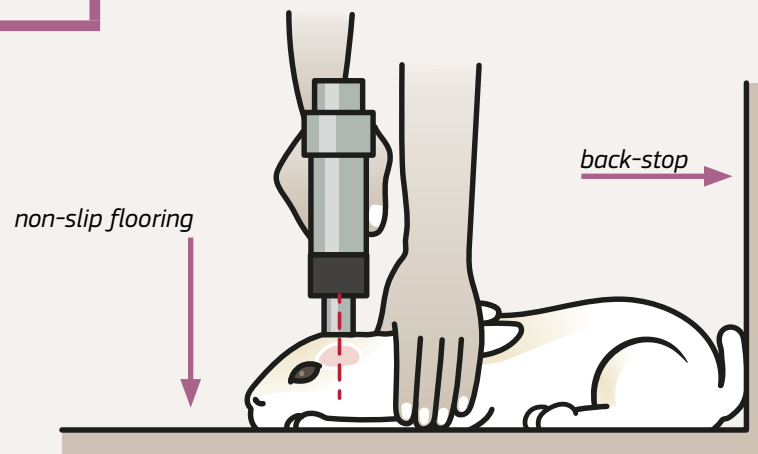
### ABOUT RABBITS

- ✦ In case of fear, pain or stress, rabbits tend to 'freeze', i.e. not showing any visible reaction
- ✦ Handle agitated rabbits **with care** to avoid injury to rabbit or handler
- ✦ Lift by **scruff of neck** or **skin over shoulders** (**never lift by the ears** – they are sensitive)



### STUNNING/KILLING

**Good handling and restraining are vital for effective stunning.** Once a rabbit is restrained, you can consider the following methods.



### 1. PENETRATIVE/NON-PENETRATIVE CAPTIVE BOLT

A penetrative captive bolt is fired through the skull into the brain. A non-penetrative captive bolt strikes the forehead without penetrating the skull. After stunning rabbits, **bleed within 10 seconds** so they don't suffer.

#### Restrain and position

- ✦ Place rabbit on non-slip flooring with a backstop so it can't back away
- ✦ Hold it down with one hand by its neck and shoulders, with your thumb and index finger on either side of the rabbit's neck
- ✦ Operate the gun with your other hand

#### Parameters

- ✦ Read the manufacturer's instructions to be sure the captive bolt is appropriate for rabbits
- ✦ Penetrative captive bolts should be **at least 6 mm in diameter**

## 2. HEAD-ONLY ELECTRICAL STUNNING

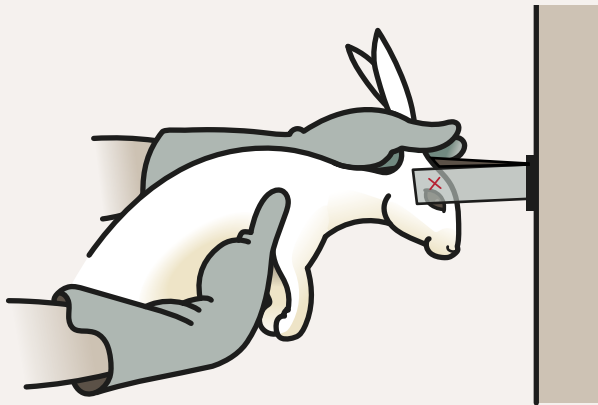
This method will not kill the rabbit. After stunning, **bleed the rabbit within 10 seconds** so that it doesn't suffer.

### Prepare the equipment

- ✦ Wet the areas of the rabbit's head where the electrodes will be applied
- ✦ Wear rubber gloves and boots

### Position the rabbit

- ✦ Supporting the rabbit's belly or holding its hind legs with one hand, guide the head by holding ears with your other hand
- ✦ Alternatively, hold both back legs of the rabbit with one hand while your other hand guides the head by holding the ears
- ✦ Place the electrodes **between the outer corners of its eyes and the base of its ears**, away from the nose



### Check the parameters

#### RECOMMENDED PARAMETERS FOR ELECTRICAL STUNNING/KILLING

Voltage (volts – V)	Current (milliamperes – mA)	Frequency (hertz – Hz)	Duration (seconds)
100-117	140-400	50	1-3

## 3. PERCUSSIVE BLOW TO HEAD

Used correctly, this method kills.

**You may kill no more than 70 rabbits per day with this method.**

### Position the rabbit

- ✦ Hold the rabbit by its hind legs
- ✦ Use a heavy but easy-to-handle object (e.g. club, iron piping)
- ✦ Hit the rabbit on top of its head, just behind the ears

### Check for consciousness

Make sure rabbits are unconscious before bleeding. Check for:

*no blinking (spontaneous or when eyes are touched)*

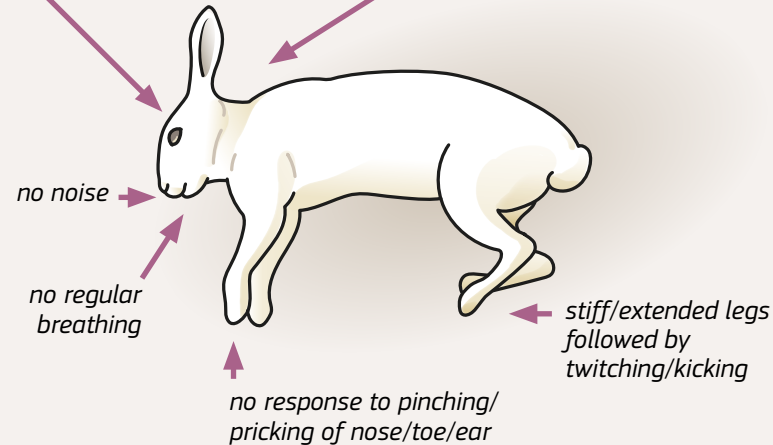
*no attempt to stand/lift its head*

*no noise*

*no regular breathing*

*no response to pinching/pricking of nose/toe/ear*

*stiff/extended legs followed by twitching/kicking*



## AFTER STUNNING

### If the rabbit is still conscious

- ✦ Don't bleed
- ✦ **Stun again with a back-up method**
- ✦ See what went wrong
- ✦ Correct any problems before resuming stunning

### Confirm the death, check for:

- ✦ No spontaneous movement
- ✦ No response to pinching/pricking of nose/toe/ear
- ✦ Limp/permanently collapsed body
- ✦ Dilated pupils
- ✦ No noise/panting
- ✦ No breathing
- ✦ No heartbeat
- ✦ No bleeding