

ANIMAL WELFARE

Title: Development of an interactive training app for timely and humane on-farm euthanasia –
NPB #15-042

revised

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Scientific Abstract:

With extensive knowledge and training in the prevention, management, and treatment of disease conditions in animals, veterinarians play a critical role in ensuring good welfare on swine farms by training caretakers on the importance of timely euthanasia as a means to end pain and suffering in severely compromised pigs. To assist veterinarians and other industry professionals in training both new and seasoned caretakers, an interactive computer-based training program was created. Three modules covering three production stages (breeding, pre-wean, and nursery and grower-finisher pigs) were developed, each consisting of 5-6 individual case studies. Case study development was based off of five specific euthanasia criteria defined in the 2015 Common Swine Industry Audit (CSIA), a nationally recognized auditing program utilized in the United States. Case studies provides information regarding treatment history, clinical signs, and condition severity of the pig and then prompts participants to utilize this information to make management decisions on treatment and care of those individuals. Once a decision is made, feedback regarding the appropriateness of the decision is provided to allow participants the opportunity to learn how their decision compared to current industry guidelines. This program may also be a valuable resource if incorporated into veterinary, graduate, and continuing education curriculum to equip those that work within the swine industry with information and training on appropriate euthanasia decision-making. This innovative tool represents the first interactive euthanasia-specific training program in the swine industry and offers the potential to reduce the incidence of untimely euthanasia decisions, and thus poor pig welfare.

These research results were submitted in fulfillment of checkoff-funded research projects. This report is published directly as submitted by the project's principal investigator. This report has not been peer-reviewed.

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