

## LETTER

### New Zealand slaughter standards

Sir,

I would like to comment on the short unsigned review of the *Codes of Recommendations and Minimum Standards for the Welfare of Animals at the Time of Slaughter at Licensed and Approved Premises* published in *Animal Welfare* 4(3): August 1995.

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New Zealand*

As Chairman of the sub-committee of the Animal Welfare Advisory Committee in New Zealand which produced this Code, I would like to express my appreciation for your favourable review, but would like to comment on an incorrect assumption.

It was suggested by your reviewer that shooting to one side of the midline 'leaves little margin for error and might lead to less effective stunning'. I believe this statement is based on incorrect assumptions which have been perpetuated in text books for many years. If animals are shot in the midline of the frontal region of the head with a captive-bolt pistol, there is a possibility that the bolt will pass between the cerebral hemispheres, and in the larger animal will not be of sufficient length to penetrate the brain stem. Shooting to one side of the midline will ensure penetration of a cerebral hemisphere and immediate insensibility, providing the bolt has sufficient energy to penetrate the skull. The physical and anatomical concepts and practice of this procedure have been outlined in greater detail by Blackmore and Delany (1988).

#### Reference

**Blackmore D K and Delany M W 1988**  
*Slaughter of Stock: A Practical Review and Guide*. Publication No 118. Veterinary Continuing Education, Massey University, Palmerston North, New Zealand.