

## Euthanasia in Poultry

Although not a nice subject to discuss, it is important to realise the different options available for when the time comes. For most people I would advise visiting your vet and having your bird injected, but if you are keen and confident then cervical dislocation is another method which can be used if needed.

Cervical dislocation is the oldest method used and has variable opinions as to whether being welfare friendly. It is carried out by holding the bird by its legs or hanging it upside down and placing the head between your index and third fingers with the head in your palm. A sharp pull and twist dislocates the neck and ruptures the spinal cord. Flapping will occur afterwards even when the bird is dead, so it can be distressing to watch. There are several dispatcher tools used to make this easier but these are best left to people who know how to use them effectively.

An injection of barbiturate solution is normally a quick and painless procedure; some vets will anaesthetise the bird first with gas before injecting. The injection is done into a vein if one can be easily accessed or alternatively into the liver.

Unfortunately burying chickens at home is illegal due to the disease spread risk, especially Botulism to Cattle. Chickens must be incinerated or cremated, but unlike some other farm species ashes can be returned to you to be scattered or buried if requested.

