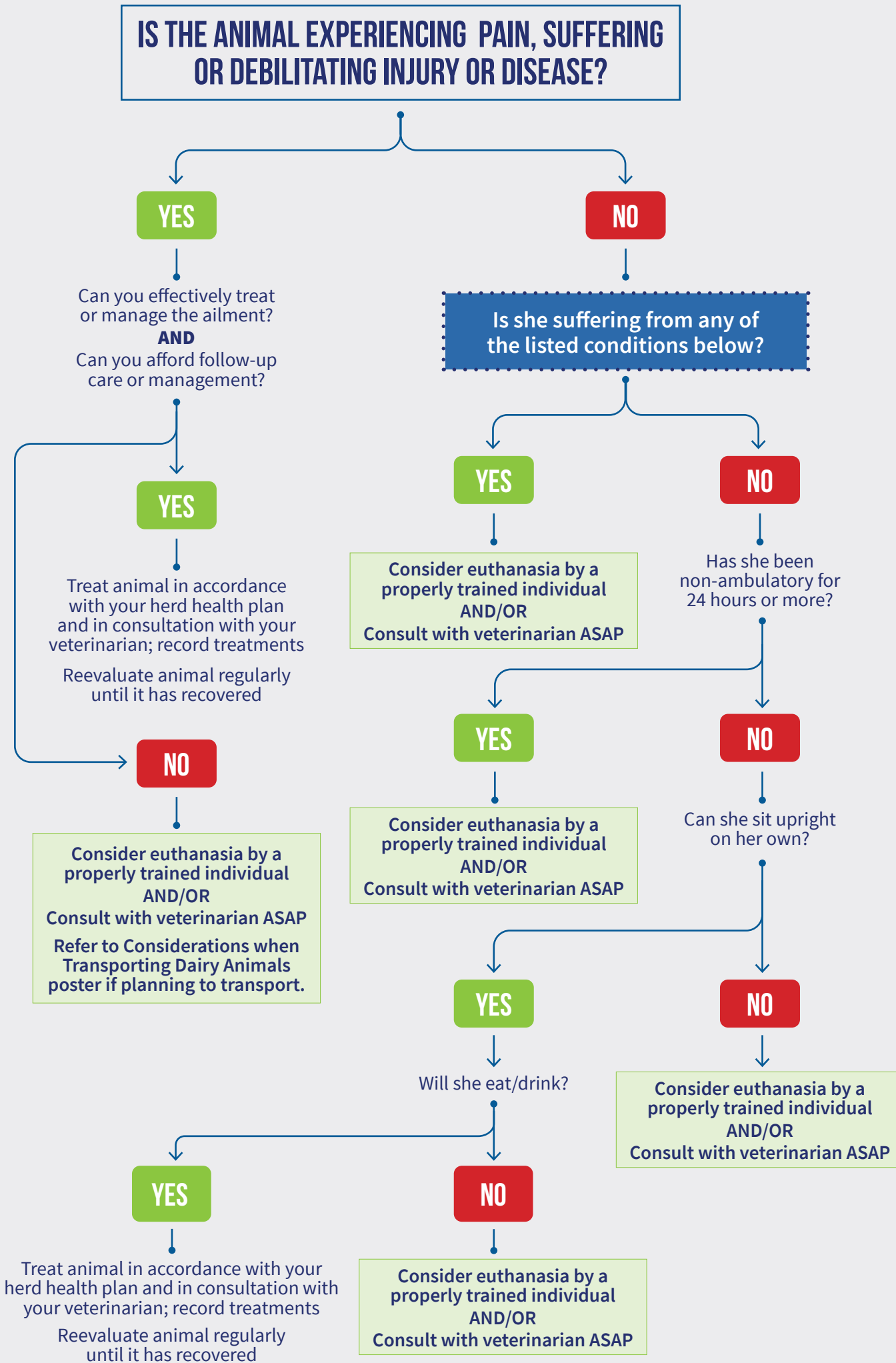


# DAIRY CATTLE EUTHANASIA DECISION TREE

Use the following decision tree to determine if euthanasia should be performed immediately.



**Pain:** An unpleasant physical sensation occurring in varying degrees of severity because of injury, disease or resulting from a medical or management procedure.



## RECOMMENDED PRIMARY EUTHANASIA METHODS

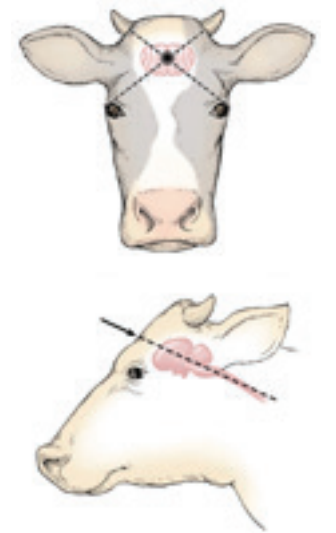
If death is not confirmed following a primary method, a secondary method must be used to complete euthanasia.

1

**Gunshot** using an appropriate firearm, ammunition and anatomic site to cause physical disruption of brain activity by direct destruction of brain tissue.

2

**Penetrating captive bolt (PCB)** to induce unconsciousness in combination with an adjunctive step such as exsanguination, intravenous administration of a saturated solution of either potassium chloride or magnesium sulfate, or pithing (increasing destruction of brain and spinal cord tissue) to ensure death.



Illustrations courtesy J.K. Shearer of the Cash Special Euthanizer Kit® for euthanasia of cattle Anim. Welf. 2012; 21: 00-102.

3

**Chemical** Intravenous (IV) barbiturate administered by a veterinarian or IV anesthetic agents that render the animal unconscious to allow for a secondary step. Note, these animals should not be rendered.

## Conditions or situations may lead to an animal being compromised to such an extent that euthanasia should be performed immediately:

- Extended drug withdrawal time for clearance of tissue residue
- INABILITY TO:**
  - Maintain sitting upright position with head held up
  - Move and raise front legs once lifted under assistance
  - Stand due to catastrophic fracture, trauma or disease of the limbs, hips or spine
- SUFFERING FROM:**
  - Advanced ocular neoplastic conditions (i.e., cancer eye)
  - Age or injury that results in the animal being too compromised for transport or market
  - Chronic pneumonia and difficulty breathing/gasping for air
  - Chronic repeated bloating
  - Conditions with no effective treatment (e.g., Johne's disease or lymphoma)
  - Disease conditions with cost-prohibitive treatment
  - Diseases with a significant threat to human health (i.e., rabies)
  - Emaciation and/or debilitation from disease
  - Pain and distress that cannot be managed
  - Poor prognosis or prolonged expected recovery
  - Uncontrollable bleeding from a major blood vessel