

Biosecurity Measures for Cattle Transportation



Transporters have a crucial role in preventing or reducing the spread of diseases during transportation

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Diseases in livestock can lead to animal health, human health, and economic consequences. This fact sheet highlights key biosecurity measures to protect cattle from contracting or spreading diseases during transportation and minimize costs due to outbreak of diseases.

What is biosecurity?

Biosecurity is a set of measures used to reduce the chance of the introduction and spread of disease-causing organisms and pests. During transportation, cattle can be at risk of contracting infectious disease from exposure to infected cattle, other animals, carcasses and pests (such as rodents and insects) or contact with manure, bodily fluids and aerosols of infected cattle or contaminated trailers, equipment, and people. A chain of strict biosecurity measures is recommended to maintain the health and well-being of cattle at the place of loading, during transportation and at the destination site.

Why is biosecurity important?

On average, cattle are transported three to four times in their lifetime. These transportation events provide an opportunity to spread infectious diseases, which may cause significant financial losses to the producers, transporters, livestock industry, and government.

Who is responsible for biosecurity?

Producers, caretakers, transporters and everyone else involved in the transportation of cattle are responsible for ensuring animal health and welfare. It is recommended that biosecurity measures be implemented at all times during loading, on the road and during unloading. Always discuss biosecurity with the producers before transportation.

BIOSECURITY BEST PRACTICES

Only load livestock onto clean trailers

Dirty trailers can spread disease. To reduce the risk of spreading disease:

- Clean and disinfect trailers between transportation events.
- Use effective and compatible cleaning (detergents, degreasers) and disinfection products; consult specialists as needed. Follow the manufacturer's recommended water temperature, concentration and contact time. Ensure that trailer surfaces are visually clean and free of all organic matter before applying a disinfectant.
- Before loading, inspect the trailer to ensure that it is dry and visibly clean.



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Visually inspect for the presence of organic matter before applying disinfectant.

Avoid contact with other animals

Animals can appear healthy yet still shed pathogens (e.g. bacteria, viruses, and fungi) that can put other animals at risk of infection. To reduce this risk:

- Whenever possible, avoid transporting animals from multiple farms on the same trailer.
- Transport animals of equal health status. It is in the interest of the producers that their animals are appropriately vaccinated. It is recommended to vaccinate beef

calves for respiratory infections a few weeks before transportation.

- At commingling sites, rest stations or other stops, park away from other livestock trailers or animals.
- As much as possible, prevent animals from your shipment from interacting with other livestock or animals throughout the transportation event, including at commingling sites.

People and equipment

People and equipment that have come into contact with diseased animals or their environment can pose a risk to your animals. To minimize this risk:

- Whenever possible, use designated equipment (e.g. shovels, rattle paddles and canes). Clean and disinfect all equipment after use.
- Do not share equipment with others or use it for other purposes.
- People who come into contact with the animals being transported must wear clean clothing and footwear.

- Always clean and sanitize hands before and after contact with cattle, other animals, or equipment.
- Discourage people not involved with transporting the animals from coming into contact with the animals in the shipment, equipment and trailer.
- Use bedding that is clean and free of contaminants. Do not reuse bedding.
- Keep the truck cab clean to prevent cross-contamination between transportation events.



Remove dirty coveralls and footwear before entering the cab.



Always clean and sanitize hands before and after contact with cattle, other animals or equipment.

GENERAL BIOSECURITY RECOMMENDATIONS

- ▶▶ Plan your transportation event.
- ▶▶ Determine and follow biosecurity protocols for departure and destination sites. Respect and follow posted biosecurity signs.
- ▶▶ When accessing sites, avoid muddy or manure-contaminated pathways. Drive slowly to minimize contamination of the undercarriage of the trailer.
- ▶▶ Do not cross-contaminate between the transport unit and the sites. Establish a line of separation for clean and dirty sides at the sites. Do not cross that line unless you wear clean coveralls, gloves, and footwear.
- ▶▶ Whenever possible, select routes that avoid locations where a disease is identified. Follow disease outbreak updates provided by the CFIA, USDA, and provincial/territorial or state governments.
- ▶▶ Clean out (scrape) all organic waste, including bedding, feed, and manure at a designated scrape-out location or the destination site.

It is recommended that transporters be aware of signs of disease and fitness for transport

For more information, visit the biosecurity standard for livestock, poultry and deadstock transportation on the Canadian Food Inspection Agency's (CFIA) website at inspection.gc.ca, and Canadian Animal Health Coalition website at animalhealth.ca.