

# Livestock Transport in Canada

Are you sure that animal  
is fit for the trip?



Canadian Food  
Inspection Agency

Agence canadienne  
d'inspection des aliments

Canada

## Your responsibility

All those involved in transporting animals must ensure that every animal being loaded is fit for the trip and treated humanely.

Only animals that are fit to handle the stress of transport may be loaded. If you are not sure, seek the advice of a veterinarian or contact the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) before deciding to load an animal.

A veterinarian familiar with the CFIA's *Compromised Animals Policy*, which provides clear guidelines for the transportation of unfit or compromised animals, may be needed to properly assess animals before loading.

## Regulations for the transportation of animals

The CFIA, with the help of other federal, provincial and territorial authorities, enforces the requirements for the transport of animals found in Part XII of the *Health of Animals Regulations*.



Non-ambulatory animal  
(unable to stand on its own)

The federal requirements regulate the movement of all animals by all modes of transport—land, air and sea. Some provinces have additional regulations related to animal transport. Contact your respective provincial or territorial government for further information.

## Unfit animals: Do NOT transport

Animals that are unfit must not be transported except for treatment or diagnosis on the advice of a veterinarian. Unfit animals must be cared for and treated on farm if it is humane to do so. Animals that are unlikely to get better must either be euthanized or humanely slaughtered on site.

**The Compromised Animals Policy on the CFIA website provides a list of conditions which render animals unfit for transport.**

An animal must not be transported if it:

- is unable to get up or stand without assistance or move without being dragged or carried;
- has a broken limb or pelvis;
- has a rupture of the pre-pubic tendon (splitting);
- is likely to give birth or has given birth within the last 48 hours;
- is suffering from exhaustion and/or dehydration;
- is in shock or dying;
- has a uterine prolapse;
- has an injury and is hobbled to aid in treatment;
- \*is lame on one or more limbs as shown by:
  - an obvious limp with uneven weight bearing, and the inability to bear any weight on one leg is immediately identifiable (unable to use a foot to walk); or
  - obvious shortened strides, halted movement and a reluctance to move.
- has a hernia that:
  - hampers movement (includes conditions in which the hind legs of the animal touch the hernia when the animal is walking);
  - is painful when touched or examined;
  - touches the ground when the animal is standing in its natural position; and/or
  - has an open skin wound, ulceration, or obvious infection.

*\*Animals that have a deformity or an amputated limb that has fully healed and are **NOT** suffering due to the lameness, can be transported to local slaughter or care with special provisions.*



Do not transport due to split condition



## Compromised animals: Transport ONLY with special provisions

Compromised animals do not handle the stress of transportation very well.

Steps can be taken to prevent unjustified or unreasonable injury or suffering if the animals are to be moved short distances to get care, treatment, be euthanized or humanely slaughtered.

Compromised animals intended for slaughter may not travel long distances to slaughter facilities. Instead, they should be killed humanely on site.

Compromised animals may not go through auction markets or assembly yards.

Animals with conditions such as those listed below may only be transported with special provisions.

- imperfect movement, or a slight limp;
- acute frostbite;
- acute penis injury;
- a rectal or vaginal prolapse;
- bloat (if not weak or already down);
- laboured breathing;
- an amputated limb;
- partial or total blindness;
- a large udder due to heavy lactation (requiring milking every 12 hours);
- an open wound or laceration (depending on the severity of the wound, the animal may be unfit for transport); or
- squamous cell carcinoma (cancer eye stage 2 or 3, as defined in the CFIA's *Compromised Animals Policy*).

**A more extensive list of conditions describing compromised animals can be found in the CFIA's Compromised Animals Policy on the CFIA web site.**

**For your nearest CFIA  
Area office, visit:  
[www.inspection.gc.ca](http://www.inspection.gc.ca)**

Examples of special provisions include:

- transporting locally and directly to the nearest suitable place where the animal can be properly cared for, humanely slaughtered, or euthanized;
- loading last and unloading first; and
- segregation from all other animals, or penning with one familiar companion animal.

To prevent animal suffering, other special provisions such as additional bedding may be required, depending on the condition of the compromised animal. Transportation of a compromised animal without special provisions that results in undue suffering is a violation of the *Health of Animals Regulations*.

Always contact the CFIA if you are not sure of the special provisions needed to move a compromised animal.

## **Animals that become unfit or compromised during the trip**

Animals that become compromised or unfit during transport must be transported directly to the nearest suitable place (e.g. a veterinary hospital, farm, or slaughter plant) where the animal can receive care or be humanely slaughtered or euthanized.

An animal that cannot walk or stand must not be unloaded while conscious unless for treatment or diagnosis on the advice of a veterinarian.

## Transportation practices

Practices that can help protect animals during transportation include:

- using loading and unloading facilities as well as containers and transport vehicles suitable to the animals being transported;



Suitable vehicle for transporting horses (e.g. sufficient headroom, secure footing)



Unsuitable vehicle for transporting horses (e.g. sharp edges)



Configuration of suitable loading facility



Configuration of unsuitable loading facility (e.g. gap, no ramp)

- using handling aids (e.g. pig boards) that do not excite the animal or cause injury or suffering;



Appropriate handling aid

- providing adequate space and headroom for animals to be in a natural position and to be able to reposition themselves for balance and safety during transport;



Proper loading density



Too crowded



Proper loading density



Too crowded

- providing feed, water and rest at required intervals;
- providing adequate ventilation for all animals;
- providing protection from the weather; and
- providing non-slip, secure footing.



Textured flooring and secure footholds



Inappropriate (e.g. unsecured load, improper footing, exposure to weather, etc.)



## Are you sure that animal is fit for the trip?

If you are responsible for activities related to the loading, unloading and transporting of animals, you **must** be familiar with—and follow—Canada's animal transport requirements.

If you do not comply with the regulations, you could be fined or prosecuted.

If your actions or neglect are considered animal abuse, you could also be charged and convicted under the *Criminal Code of Canada* and/or provincial regulations.

**If you are not sure an animal is fit for the trip, contact a veterinarian or the CFIA.**

For more information on humane transportation requirements or for your nearest CFIA area office, visit [www.inspection.gc.ca](http://www.inspection.gc.ca)