

Cattle and Sheep Welfare during Transport: What are the Good and the Best Practices to improve this?

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The COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) No 1/2005 applies to anyone transporting live vertebrate animals in connection with an economic activity and set up rules intended to improve the welfare of animals (with specific provisions for dairy species) during transport. The Regulation has had beneficial impact on the welfare of animals during transport. However, it appears that there is a knowledge gap between the legislation and its practical implementation. Scientific evidence can address this gap and support the development and adoption of guides to good practices (EC, 2011). The aim of this paper is to present the 'Cattle Transport Guide' and the 'Sheep Transport Guide' developed within the 'Animal Transport Guides' project, funded by DG SANTE of the European Commission (<http://animaltransportguides.eu/>). The project's ambition is to facilitate understanding and practical implementation of Regulation on the transport of animals. It will help transporters to further protect dairy animals from being subject to stressors arising from catching or handling, food and water deprivation, exposure to thermal challenges, loud noises or other. The Guide is structured in five Chapters according to different phases of the journey: (1) Competence, (2) Preparation and Planning, (3) Handling and Loading Animals, (4) Travelling and (5) Unloading Animals. Numerous 'good practices' are included in the Guides defined as procedures and processes that support compliance with requirements of legislation designed to protect the animals' welfare. Moreover, a collection of 'best practices' are included, defined as providing methods of improvement of procedures and operations to exceed any legally defined minimum welfare requirement. The Animal Transport Guides are currently being translated in several European languages and it is widely disseminated among stakeholders through Road Shows, Seminars, etc. to support the animal transport industry in complying with welfare standards during poultry transport.

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