



Transport Guidance

Corresponds with requirements AW5.6

Introduction

All transport of animals should be in line with the following principles:

- Animal transport systems must be designed and managed to ensure livestock are not subjected to unnecessary distress or discomfort.
- Transport and handling of livestock must be kept to an absolute minimum.
- Personnel involved in transport must be thoroughly trained and competent to carry out the tasks required of them.

Responsibilities, Competency and Stockmanship

At every stage of transport, animals must be cared for by a sufficient number of personnel, who collectively possess the appropriate ability, knowledge and competence necessary to maintain the health and welfare of the animals.

The person in charge of an animal can change as it moves from the farm to its final destination. The responsibility for implementing the standard therefore lies with the person(s) selecting and presenting animals for transport, and also the person(s) or organization(s) accepting the animals for transport.

Where the responsibility changes, the person(s) or organization(s) accepting the animals for transport shall provide a copy of their Standard Operating Procedures.

Documentation

All required documentation must be completed and accessible to the relevant personnel prior to embarking on and during travel, so that incomplete or inaccessible documentation does not cause any delay in animals reaching the destination or being unloaded at the destination.

There must be a contingency plan in place that allows the needs of animals to be met in the event of any delays arising during the part of the journey for which the transport operator is responsible.

Fitness for travel

All sheep must be assessed as fit for transport. The following animals shall not be transported unless it is for the purposes of veterinary treatment:

- sick, injured, weak, or disabled animals
- those that are unable to stand unaided and bear weight on each leg



- those that are blind in both eyes
- those that cannot be moved without causing them additional suffering
- those whose body condition would result in poor welfare because of the expected climatic conditions.

If animals meeting these conditions are suffering and unlikely to recover, they should be euthanized on the farm. They should not be transported to auction or slaughter.

The following animals shall only be transported if the journey is short (less than 50km) and the purpose is to improve conditions for the animal and the journey will not cause unnecessary pain or suffering. Otherwise, transport shall be delayed until they are fit to travel.

- Heavily pregnant ewes (past 90% gestation)
- New born lambs where the navel has not completely healed
- Ewes that have given birth in the previous seven days

Separation

Sheep shall be handled and transported separately from other species*.

The following separations shall also be applied:

- Sheep of significantly different sizes or ages*
- Sexually mature males from females
- Animals with horns from animals without horns*
- Animals hostile to each other
- Tied animals from untied animals

* This need not apply where animals have been raised in compatible groups, are accustomed to each other and where separation would cause distress or where animals are accompanied by dependent young.

Preparation for Transport

Animals must be appropriately prepared for transport, including through the provision of sufficient food and water, as appropriate to the species, age, condition and expected length and conditions of the journey, so that pain, injury or distress to themselves or other animals is avoided.



Before undertaking a journey during which the animals will be fed and watered, animals must be familiarized with the feed to be offered and the methods by which the feed and water are given.

Transport vehicles and facilities for livestock

- The vehicle and its loading and unloading facilities shall be designed, constructed and maintained to avoid injury and suffering and to ensure the safety of the animals.
- Ramps shall be set at an incline of no greater than 27 degrees and have measures in place to prevent injury.
- Conveyances and containers must be designed to ensure adequate ventilation or oxygenation to allow the free flow of air or oxygen to all animals, even when stationary, to prevent the build-up of harmful concentrations of gases or impurities, water vapor or temperature.
- Conveyances and containers must be designed to provide protection from adverse weather that may be a risk to the animal's health and welfare.
- Where animals show signs of heat or cold stress or distress from exposure to noxious gases, immediate corrective action must be taken.
- Animals shall not be transported when climactic conditions are likely to cause significant discomfort or harm, including during hot and cold temperature extremes, heavy snow, or freezing rain.

Loading and Unloading

- Animals must be loaded and unloaded in a way that minimizes the risk of pain, injury or distress to the animals. The use of electric prodders is prohibited.
- Sheep shall not be dropped, dragged or pulled by the fleece, tail, ears, head, or neck.
- Manual handling or restraining of sheep shall be performed with one hand/arm under the neck and other placed on or around the rear.
- Stocking density must be sufficient to allow animals to adopt a natural posture during the journey.

Recommended space allowance:

- Shorn sheep and lambs of 26 kg or over: 0.20-0.30 m²/animal
- Unshorn sheep: 0.30-0.40 m²/animal



- Heavily pregnant ewes 0.40-0.50 m²/animal

Journey times, food, water and rest

- All animals should be transported for the shortest possible time. Journeys shall be direct, without any prolonged stops.
- Water, feed and opportunity to rest shall be made available to animals as appropriate to meet their health needs.
- After each 24 hours of travel adult sheep shall have a rest period of at least 12 hours.
- Animals between weaning and 12 months of age require a rest period of at least 12 hours after every 18 hours of transport.
- During every specified rest period, sheep of all ages must:
 - a) be unloaded;
 - b) have access to food and clean water (except during the last 8 hours before reloading);
 - c) have enough space for exercise and rest.

Water and feed shall be provided at least once in every 24 hours to animals older than 12 months – the only exception is animals traveling on a journey that will be entirely completed in 30 hours.

The relevant period for determining feed and water requirement is the total period of deprivation of feed and water from the time of initial loading until unloading after the second or last journey

Monitoring and Records

- Animals must be inspected for injury or signs of pain or distress at regular intervals during the journey, including at rest breaks taken by the operator of the conveyance and at refueling stops.
- Animals found to be distressed or injured shall be assisted, treated or if required, euthanized as soon as practicable.
- The mortality and injury rate shall be recorded.