

# Transporting vulnerable animals

## *Guidelines for farmers preparing stock for transport*

- Handle with care and patience at all times (particularly pregnant animals)
- All stock should be provided with water before loading
- Stood off pasture for at least 4 hours before transport to minimise effluent production
- Grazed-off pasture or a wood chip pad are preferred over concrete for standing off
- Provide immediate access to feed and water on arrival.

## *Guidelines for transport of animals in late pregnancy*

- Pregnant animals in their last three months of pregnancy should not be transported for any period greater than 8 hours
- Cows in the last four weeks of gestation should not be subject to journeys longer than two hours
- Rest periods of at least 12 hours after each 8 hours of travel must be provided
- Animals should be offered food and water as soon as possible after arrival at their destination
- Pregnant cows should not be transported on the top deck of a double-decker transport unit unless they can be unloaded on a ramp with a slope no more than 20° (about 1:3)
- Animals that are likely to give birth during transport must not be transported
- Pregnant cows should be separated from other cattle
- Magnesium should be provided for 3-4 days either side of transport (J = 12g/cow/day, F = 20g/cow/day).

## *Guidelines for farmers transporting stock long distances (more than four hours or across the Cook Strait)*

- Magnesium is provided 3-4 days either side of transport (J = 12g/cow/day, F = 20g/cow/day)
- If using supplementary feed, introduce it into the diet gradually over several days before the trip
- Provide immediate access to feed and water on arrival
- Adult cattle should not be transported for more than 12 hours without water and 24 hours without food.

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## Guidelines for transporting cull cows

- Cull cows for the abattoir should be processed as close to home as possible
- Cull cows with body condition score of 3 or less should not be sent to public saleyards
- Cull cows not going to a processing plant should be offered food and water as soon as possible after arrival at their destination.

## Selecting and preparing young calves for transport

- **Healthy** – No visible disease (e.g. scours), deformity, injury, blindness or disability. Eyes should be 'bright', not dull or shrunken. Ears are upright. Active and alert
- **Strong** – Able to bear weight on all four limbs. Able to rise from a lying position and move freely around the pen
- **Hooves** – Firm and worn, not rounded or soft
- **Navel** – Dry and withered, not pink/red, raw or fleshy
- **Fed** – At least half the day's ration of colostrum (or colostrum substitute) is given not more than two hours before pick-up
- **Separated** – Young calves should be separated from other cattle.

## Guidelines for transporting unweaned calves

- A journey transporting calves must not be undertaken if the first calf collected will take more than 12 hours to reach the final destination
- If travelling in the same vehicle, calves should be separated from older animals
- Calves weighing less than 15 kg at birth (which are usually too premature to survive), as well as those with severe physical defects and painful congenital defects, should be destroyed and not transported
- Calves should be transported in vehicles with enclosed fronts to prevent windchill
- Trucks and trailers should not be parked in such a way that the animals might suffer from extreme heat or cold
- Vehicles used to transport calves must be cleaned before calves are loaded
- Electric prodders and dogs must not be used on calves.