

T-3.9 WVA Live Animal Transportation Policy

The WVA recognizes that all around the World, animals are transported for many reasons, and that practices vary widely amongst the regions; and the WVA supports transport where animal welfare is maintained above defined minimum standards that are based on sound science.

Background

The WVA recognizes that animals are transported for a number of reasons such as the establishment of production animals in new areas; for slaughter where there is insufficient local production and/or insufficient local infrastructure to support trade in animal products; and for breeding and for companionship.

The WVA notes the internationally recognized “Five Freedoms” which provide valuable guidance on animal welfare and the development of standards by the Office International des Épizooties and individual countries.

When transportation is necessary the WVA recommends that the duration is as short as possible and takes place with due regard to the welfare of the animals based on scientific principles. Therefore, the WVA recommends that the following principles are carefully reviewed by a veterinarian before animals are transported.

Principles

1. While the transport of animals is often dependent on economic conditions which will influence animal health and welfare, but also of importance to public health, conditions en route should at least meet the minimum standards.
2. The transportation of live animals should be conducted by means that fulfil animal welfare technical standards that are based on sound science.
3. Animal transportation should be in accordance with any regulations set by the veterinary services of the country or countries involved.

4. Factors of greatest importance during transport are:
 - Means of transport
 - The route plan
 - The competence of the operator
 - Species
 - The health of the animals
 - The duration of transport which starts when the first animal is been loaded and lasts until the last animal has been unloaded
 - Loading density
 - Meteorological conditions
 - Ventilation
 - The provision of food and water
 - Provision for the animals to rest

5. The veterinary profession can assist transporters and the public in determining what influence transportation can have on health and welfare of transported animals.