Producers work hard to ensure that the animals in their care are properly cared for throughout all stages of production. Unfortunately, it is a fact of farming that some animals will become injured or ill to the extent that they are 'compromised' or 'at risk'.

This would include animals that are non-ambulatory, unable to stand without assistance or to move without being dragged or carried, regardless of size or age.

This guide will assist dairy, beef and veal producers to recognize health-related problems and respond to them in a responsible manner. Producers are encouraged to work with their herd veterinarians for early intervention culling decisions.

In addition to the decision tree on page 4, producers should simply ask themselves three questions before loading an animal:

- Can it walk?
- Will it be able to walk off the truck at the final destination?
- Would I eat it?

If any question generates a ‘no’ response, a veterinary diagnosis should be made to determine the possibility of rehabilitation or the animal should be euthanized on-farm.

The Health of Animals Act states it is a violation to load, or cause to load, any animal that is sick, injured or would suffer unduly if transported A recent change includes non-ambulatory animals specifically.

Non-ambulatory animals are also called ‘downers’. Early recognition of problems and prompt, appropriate treatment are key factors in preventing the loss of an animal. Non-ambulatory animals must be treated, euthanized, or transported to a veterinary hospital for treatment. It is against the law to transport a compromised or at risk animal. It is the responsibility of any person who owns or handles cows or calves to ensure these animals receive proper veterinary care and/or are shipped locally for processing or humanely euthanized.
Decisions to treat animals or to ship them to market are often difficult involving economic and animal welfare considerations. However, these decisions should be made as early as possible to minimize pain, discomfort or further deterioration of the animal and ensure a maximum monetary return for the producer. Animals that have undergone treatment must be held for the required withdrawal time to allow the drugs to clear the animal's system.

Many producers are unaware their animals may be subjected to extended journeys that might last days in either very cold or warm temperatures and will stress them beyond their limits, possibly causing them to go down in transit. Therefore, only healthy animals or animals healthy enough to be transported should be loaded.

Legislation, both federal and provincial dictates animals must be handled humanely. Enforcement agencies and the courts will use accepted standards and the laws to determine which practices are acceptable and which are not. The Recommended Codes of Practice are presently regarded as a benchmark reference for animal welfare-related questions.

Canadians consistently rate animal welfare as one of their top three issues/concerns about agriculture. Economic and competitive pressures often conflict with a societal expectation that animals will be managed in an ethical and responsible manner. Due diligence through responsible stockmanship must be an industry priority. This will be rewarded by enhanced production and a more positive image for the industry.
Decision Making Steps to Prevent Compromised Animals:

The following actions by producers will assist in early detection of problems and options to address them.

- **Prevention**: Biosecurity, herd health programs, equipment and stall designs, as well as early identification of herd or facility-related problems will help to prevent many animal health problems.

- **Observation**: Cattle should be observed several times a day, especially during milking or feeding. Early detection of illness and appropriate treatment are key elements in minimizing disease and discomfort.

- **Treatment**: Treatment should be determined and administered as soon as possible to prevent conditions from deteriorating. Consult with a veterinarian to develop treatment strategies and protocols for common ailments.

- **Separation**: Segregate compromised animals into designated ‘hospital’ pens or areas to permit close observation and treatment.

- **Transport**: If animals are fit for transport, decide where and when to ship them, ensuring all medicine withdrawal times have been observed.

- **Euthanize**: All animals unfit for transport or unfit for human consumption must be euthanized on-farm. It is illegal to load or transport an animal that is unfit. (Refer to “Should this animal be transported?” decision tree chart for specific conditions rendering an animal ‘unfit or compromised’ for specific details). Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) enforced laws prohibit the loading, transporting and unloading of non-ambulatory animals for any purpose other than for veterinary treatment under the order of a veterinarian.
**SHOULD THIS ANIMAL BE LOADED?**
**Guidelines for Transporting Cattle**

**Do Not Load**
- **Do Not Transport**

**Delay Transportation and Reassess**
- Exhaustion
- Calving/lambing/kidding
- Weakness
- Fever:
  - Cattle: > 102.5°F (39.1°C)
  - Sheep/goats: > 103.3°F (39.6°C)

**Euthanize**
- **Non-ambulatory** (see box below)
  - Fractures of limb or spine
  - Arthritis with multiple joints
  - Cancer eye (severe)
  - Cancer/leukosis (extensive)
  - Extremely thin
  - Pneumonia (unresponsive with fever)
  - Prolapsed uterus
  - Water belly
  - Nervous disorders, such as rabies must be reported to CFIA

**Transport Direct to Processor as soon as possible**
- Abscess
- Blind
- Cancer eye (eye intact)
- Lameness class 1 & 2 (see reverse)
- Left/right displaced abomasum (without weakness, toxicity)
- Lumpy jaw
- Penis injuries
- Pneumonia (without fever)
- Prolapsed vagina or rectum

**Transport Direct to Emergency Processing Facility**
- Advise inspector at the destination plant.
  - Bloat*
  - Hardware with localized signs
  - Intestinal accidents
  - Recent injury*
  - Urethral blockage (acute)*
  - Broken tail or jaw

*Animals must travel in a small compartment, either individually segregated or with one quiet animal.

**Non-ambulatory Animals**
- Unable to stand without assistance, or unable to move without being dragged or carried. Commonly called “downers.” Assistance may not include any touching of the animal.
- Animals should be able to bear weight on all four limbs to be suitable for transport.
- Lameness class 3, 4 & 5 should not be loaded or transported, except for veterinary treatment.
- Animals should not be loaded if at risk of going down en route.

Animals may only be shipped to slaughter if:
- a. All drug withdrawal times are met.
- b. The animal is fit for human consumption.
- c. The animal can be humanely loaded and transported. If these conditions are not met, the animal must be humanely euthanized and disposed of according to all regulations.

**PLEASE CONTACT YOUR VETERINARIAN FOR ADVICE OR ASSISTANCE.**

**Guidelines for Transporting Cattle**
- **Load Healthy Animals**
- **Transport With Special Provisions**
Guidelines for Dealing with Compromised Cattle

Federal Transportation Regulations

**DO**
- Segregate animals of different species, or substantially different weights and ages, or if incompatible by nature.
- Provide proper ventilation, drainage and absorption of urine.
- Have sufficient headroom for animals to stand in a natural position.
- Either strew the vehicle with sand or have the vehicle fitted with safe footholds, in addition to appropriate bedding.
- Ensure that animals unloaded for feed, water and rest remain at least five hours and longer, if necessary, for all animals to receive food and water.
- Ensure that calves too young to exist on hay and grain are provided with suitable food and water at intervals of no more than 18 hours.
- Ensure that animals segregated in trucks receive extra protection from cold and wind chill; supply ample bedding.
- Euthanize animals promptly as the conditions outlined on the reverse occur.

**DO NOT**
- Transport a sick or injured animal where undue suffering may result, or when the animal is liable to give birth during the journey.
- Continue to transport an animal that is injured, becomes ill, or is otherwise unfit to travel beyond the nearest place it can be treated.
- Mishandle an animal on loading or unloading.
- Use goads or prods on the face, anal, udder or genital area.
- Load or unload animals in a way that would cause injury or undue suffering.
- Crowd animals to such an extent as to cause injury or undue suffering.
- Transport livestock in trailers not designed for safe handling of that species or class of livestock.

Lameness Classes

These categories can be used to determine the status of an animal’s mobility, from normal to non-ambulatory.

**Transport as soon as possible**

**Class 1**
Visibly lame but can keep up with the group: no evidence of pain.

**Class 2**
Unable to keep up; some difficulty climbing ramps. Load in rear compartment.

**Do Not Load or Transport**

**Class 3**
Requires assistance to rise, but can walk freely.

**Class 4**
Requires assistance to rise; reluctant to walk; halted movement.

**Class 5**
Unable to rise or remain standing.

*Any animal, including Lameness Classes 3, 4 or 5 may be transported for veterinary treatment.*

Further Information

- Health of Animals Regulations (Federal) [www.inspection.gc.ca](http://www.inspection.gc.ca)
- CFIA (Transportation Emergencies): 1-877-814-2342
- Ontario SPCA: 1-888-ONT-SPCA (668-7722)

Endorsed by:

- Ontario Association of Bovine Practitioners
- Ontario Farm Animal Council

This resource may be used or reprinted with credit to the Ontario Humane Transport Working Group.


To order more copies, please contact Ontario Farm Animal Council: (519) 837-1326 [www.ofac.org](http://www.ofac.org)

December 2005
DO NOT LOAD OR TRANSPORT

Animals with any of the following conditions must not be loaded onto a vehicle for transport.

1** EXTREMELY THIN (EMACIATION) **

The Body Condition Scoring system ranges from one to five (1 – 5). (E. E. Wildman. University of Vermont).

1 - emaciated  
2 - thin  
3 - average body condition  
4 - heavy body condition  
5 - fat

Emaciated cows are extremely thin or weak cows with a Body Condition Score of one or less are considered to be emaciated and should not be loaded for transport.

Emaciation can be a symptom of other diseases or conditions. Body condition is an indication of the body reserves carried by the animal. Cows may be thin due to early lactation, sickness, poor quality or restricted feed intake.

The ideal BCS for shipping is 2.5 - 3. Thin cows (BCS 1 or 2) are more likely to be injured or suffer bruising during transport, and have a greater likelihood of becoming ‘downers’, and should be sent directly to the processor.

See page 19 - 20 for more information on Body Condition Scoring.

**PRODUCER ACTIONS:**

Observe all animals regularly to assess body condition.

Monitor closely for early signs of weight loss.

Condition cows from a tie stall for a period of time to prepare them for transport (i.e. place dairy cows in a box stall for several days for exercise).

Euthanize emaciated cows or calves on-farm. Do NOT load.

Make the decision to treat or to ship animals to be culled promptly before they deteriorate to a Body Condition Score of 2 or less.
Lameness and Non-ambulatory animals

Lameness is defined as a disturbance of locomotion and can be a behavioural indication of pain and therefore of poor animal welfare. (Whey et. Al., 1997).

Non-ambulatory animals are those unable to get up, walk or remain standing without assistance, commonly called “downers”. Assistance may not include any touching of the animal, by people or equipment.

Foot and leg problems can result in poor performance and substantial economic loss. Several factors might be responsible for causing problems:

- Nutrition and feeding practices
- Facility and physical environment
- Genetic predisposition
- Other on-going diseases

Ninety percent of lameness involves the feet, most commonly the back feet. Frequent causes of lameness include:

- Foot rot/warts
- Digital dermatitis
- Laminitis
- Claw disease (sole ulcers, white line disease)

Use the following lameness classes to determine the best approach when dealing with sick or injured cows or calves.

Class 1: visibly lame, but can keep up with the group; no evidence of pain
Class 2: unable to keep up; some difficulty climbing ramp
Class 3: requires assistance to rise, but can walk freely
Class 4: requires assistance to rise; reluctant to walk; halted movement
Class 5: unable to rise or remain standing; animal should not be moved

Producer Actions:

- Identify lame animals early and treat promptly.
- Keep accurate records for all animals.
- Cull cows with persistent problems.
- Hoof trim/evaluate feet at least once/year.
- Evaluate nutrition programs.
- Improve poor facility design; lying and walking surfaces.
- Segregate and load Class 2 animals in the rear compartment.
- Do not load or transport Class 3, 4 or 5 animals, except for veterinary treatment.
- Class 3, 4, 5 animals must be treated or euthanized on-farm.
Bone Fractures

Fractures cause an animal immense pain and can result in severe lameness and impede normal movement. Animals with limb or spine fractures should not be loaded for transport except under the order of a veterinarian for treatment for the animal’s benefit. Animals should be able to bear weight on all four limbs to be suitable for transport. Animals with non-limb fractures (i.e. tail or jaw) may be loaded and transported to the nearest suitable processor with due care. Due care could include special provisions such as using a low entry, well bedded or cushioned trailer or segregating if necessary.

Producer Action:

Do not load or transport animals with fractures that are painful or limit movement.
Euthanize limb or spine fractures on farm

Arthritis

Arthritis is an inflammation of the joint, characterized by progressive difficulty moving and increased time spent lying down with the affected joint flexed. Swollen joints can be a symptom of arthritis. Treatment is dependent on the degree of lameness. More than two joints affected can cause a cow to be condemned at slaughter.

Animals should be assessed according to the Lameness Classes 1 through 5. Those scoring 3, 4 or a 5 are considered to be ‘at risk’. Any animal can be loaded and transported for veterinary treatment under the order of a veterinarian. Refer to the ‘Producer Action’ in the previous section (2) for direction on how to proceed with animals with varying lameness scores.

Producer Action:

Observe all cows and calves for swollen joints.
Detect and treat early or ship promptly.
Determine the cause if several animals are affected.
Do not load if three or more joints are affected or animal is judged to be in Lameness Class 3, 4 or 5.
**Fever**

Fever is a symptom of an infectious disease. A continuing fever higher than 104°F (40°C) for three days or more is a sign of a serious health problem.

**Producer Action:**

Seek veterinary advice.
Do not load or transport, except for veterinary treatment.
Euthanize on-farm.

---

**Cancer Eye**

Cancer eye (ocular squamous cell carcinoma) is the most common type of cancer in cattle and is characterized by pink, fleshy growth on the eyeball, the eyelids and/or the third eyelid. Older cattle (5 years and older) and those with un-pigmented skin around the eyes are more prone to contracting cancer eye. Untreated cancer eye progresses inwardly, invading deeper tissues behind the eye. It can then progress to the lymph nodes of the head and then to body organs such as lungs and liver.

Cows with infections extending beyond the orbit of the eye and involving the bones and tissues are in stage 3 of this disease and should be euthanized on farm, as they will be partially or totally condemned at the processing plant. Stage 3 animals are not considered fit for human consumption.

**Producer Action:**

Inspect animals regularly for the early signs of cancer eye.
Recognize early symptoms of cancer eye and seek veterinary treatment.
Consider culling animals with early symptoms.
Euthanize animals with severe cancer eye.
**Pregnancy/Calving**

It is illegal to load or transport any animal if it is probable that the animal will give birth during the journey. Cows in later stages of pregnancy should be evaluated to determine if they can withstand the stress of the journey. Transportation is stressful, which can cause the early onset of labour or abortion.

**Producer Action:**

Do not ship any cows in late stages of pregnancy.

Animals that have given birth within 48 hours must not be loaded for transport.

---

**Prolapse of the uterus**

A prolapse is the protrusion of an organ or part of an organ from its normal position outside the body due to increased pressure in the abdominal cavity. Animals with prolapsed vaginas or rectums should be transported direct to the processor as soon as possible.

A uterine prolapse generally occurs directly after calving and appears as a large, elongated mass, deep red in colour, covered with ‘buttons’ on which the placenta was attached. A uterine prolapse is life-threatening and producers should seek veterinary advice or euthanize the animal immediately. Under no circumstances may a cow with a prolapsed uterus be loaded for transport, except for veterinary treatment.

**Producer Action:**

Routinely observe and monitor all cows prior to and after calving.

Promptly seek veterinary advice for prolapse problems.

Cull cows that have pre-calving prolapses.

Euthanize cows with an untreatable prolapsed uterus.

---

**Congestive Heart Failure**

Congestive heart failure with brisket and abdominal fluid present is observed as an obviously swollen brisket (edema) and engorged jugular veins. Affected animals are reluctant to move.

**Producer Action:**

Do not load or transport.

Euthanize on-farm.
10 Exhaustion or Dehydration

This would include animals that appear to be exhausted and in a physically depressed state.

**Producer Action:**

Do not load or transport animals in this condition.
Delay transport until animal is rested and re-hydrated. Seek veterinary advice.

11 Blindness in Both Eyes

Animals afflicted with total blindness in both eyes must not be loaded for transport and should be euthanized on-farm.

12 Nervous Disorders or Suspected Poisoning

Animals suffering from a nervous disorder may show similar signs to animals that have been poisoned. Affected animals may exhibit symptoms including stumbling, hyper-excitability, bawling, staggering and be unresponsive to treatment. Animals may lie with neck fully extended backwards and one or more legs extended.

Animals infected with rabies may also act as if they were in heat. Rabies must be suspected in these cases and appropriate cautions exercised. Rabies is a reportable disease and producers must notify the Canadian Food Inspection Agency if rabies is suspected.

**Producer Action:**

This could be a contagious and/or a reportable disease, so consult with a veterinarian before euthanizing.
Consult with a veterinarian regarding BSE or rabies testing.
Do not load or transport.
Euthanize on-farm after clearance from a veterinarian.
TRANSPORT ONLY WITH SPECIAL PROVISIONS

Animals exhibiting symptoms of any of the following disorders should be given time for treatment and/or transported with special provisions.

Animals with these conditions may need to be transported with special provisions directly to a processor as soon as possible, or more severe conditions require transported directly to emergency processing. These animals should not be transported to a sales barn. Special provisions can include extra bedding or segregating them on the truck to ensure their welfare and comfort during transit.

1 Lameness — Class 1 or 2

Leg problems in cattle can be caused by a variety of factors including fractures, abscesses, arthritis, laminitis and foot rot. The entire animal should be assessed, as a lame animal in poor body condition will likely be condemned at the processing plant. These animals should be euthanized on the farm. Cows in good body condition that are moderately lame (Class 1 or 2) can be transported with special provisions.

Producer Action:

Lameness Class 1 or 2 animals may be loaded for transport direct to processing.

Do NOT load Lameness Class 3, 4 or 5 animals. These animals are considered to be ‘non-ambulatory’ and unfit for loading and transport, except for veterinary treatment.

2 Lactating Cattle

Plan any culling of dairy cows in a responsible manner. Lactating cattle should be identified and shipped promptly to minimize pain and discomfort. Extended journeys for lactating animals is a distinct welfare concern, as they cannot be milked causing them extreme discomfort.

Lactating dairy cows should be properly dried off and conditioned to a maintenance ration well in advance of the shipping date to reduce discomfort or additional health problems. Cows that are still milking must not be shipped to the auction, but should be moved directly to the nearest suitable abattoir for immediate processing.

Producer Action:

Dairy animals to be shipped to market should be properly dried-off first.

Lactating dairy animals that are not be properly dried off and conditioned for transport, should be moved directly to the nearest suitable abattoir without delay.

Do NOT ship lactating animals to an auction yard for further sale or transport to another auction or other dairy herd.
Cuts and Wounds with Associated Profuse Bleeding

Puncture wounds or cuts resulting in excessive bleeding and/or lameness is cause for concern and requires attention. It is key to observe animals daily to detect cuts and wounds. Assess the severity of the injury and treat accordingly.

Producer Action:
- Observe all animals daily.
- Assess and treat wounds and/or consult with veterinarian.
- Animals with larger wounds may be loaded for veterinary treatment or shipped for emergency processing.
- Euthanize on-farm if loading will cause unnecessary pain and suffering to load and transport.

Cancer Eye

Animals afflicted with mild cases of cancer eye (tumor restricted to the orbit of the eye), with the eye still intact can be shipped for processing. It's important to differentiate between cancer eye and pink eye, as pink eye is treatable. Cancer eye: white/pink tissue growth; tumor on third eyelid, rarely on eyeball. Pink eye: general swelling, white of eye is red and lesions may be present on the eyeball.

Producer Action:
- Inspect animals regularly for early signs of cancer eye. There is no cure for cancer eye.
- Do not ship to auction.
- Mild cases of cancer eye can be transported directly to the nearest suitable abattoir.

Displaced Abomasum

A displaced abomasum (or twisted stomach) is a repositioning of the fourth stomach from its normal position on the right side of the abdominal wall to the left side in most cases. The abomasum may be filled with gas or fluid. Animals may show signs of decreased appetite with scanty bowel movements.

Producer Action:
- Seek veterinary advice to distinguish from ketosis or possible options for correction. If correction is not possible:
  - Do not transport to an auction.
  - Arrange for prompt movement to the nearest suitable abattoir.
  - Load in separate compartment with adequate bedding.
**Prolapse of the Vagina or Rectum**

Vaginal prolapses generally occur before calving. They appear to be approximately the size of a large grapefruit or volleyball. The bladder can also become involved causing the cow to have difficulty urinating.

Rectal prolapses can also occur during the birthing process due to excessive straining. Steers can be affected with rectal prolapses as well.

Vaginal or rectal prolapses should be treated promptly, as infection can occur compromising the health of the animal. Some cows are genetically predisposed to this condition. This is more common in older cows, but can occur in first-calf heifers.

**Producer Action**

- Routinely monitor herd for prolapses, particularly during calving season.
- Seek veterinary advice for treating prolapses. Cull cows with pre-calving prolapses.
- Animals with vaginal or rectal prolapses should be transported directly to the processor.

**Bone Fractures (other than limb or spine)**

Animals with a recent fracture such as a broken tail and/or jaw should be transported directly to an emergency processing facility without delay.

**Producer Action**

- Handle these animals with care during loading and transport to minimize their pain and discomfort.

**Pneumonia (without fever)**

Animals with obvious signs of laboured breathing may have pneumonia. This may involve the upper respiratory system (nostrils, throat, and trachea) or larynx or the lower respiratory tract (lungs). Pneumonia is an example of a lower respiratory tract infection.

**Producer Action**

- Treat and delay transport.
- Load with care into separate compartment of transport vehicle.
- Ship directly to nearest abattoir.

**Blindness**

Producers should exercise caution when handling animals with limited sight to reduce the risk of injury to both the animal and handlers.

**Producer Action**

- Load with care in a separate compartment, preferably with one other quiet companion animal.
- Transport these animals to the processing plant as soon as possible.
Bulls – Penis Injury

Bulls may suffer from a rupturing of the blood vessels in the penis causing severe bruising and swelling or a broken penis. A penis injury may be severe enough to cause a bull to go into shock.

**Producer Action:**
- Load with care into a separate compartment.
- Ship directly to nearest suitable abattoir.

Lumpy Jaw

Bacteria can invade wounds in the mouth and gums and localizes in the upper or lower jaw resulting in a hard bony ‘lump’. This lump may erupt and discharge granular pus that can interfere with normal eating and chewing.

**Producer Action:**
- Transport affected animals directly to nearest suitable abattoir.

Abscess

An abscess is a localized collection of pus in a cavity of disintegrated tissue. Some minor abscesses can be treated on farm. Multiple abscesses may be caused by a major illness involving other portions of the body and may result in condemnation of the carcass. Three or more visible abscesses might suggest additional internal abscesses. If an animal has multiple abscesses that do not respond to treatment, it should be euthanized on-farm, as it will likely be condemned at the processing plant.

**Producer Action:**
- Check animals for abscesses regularly. Treat as soon as possible.
- Try to identify source if multiple abscesses are present.
- Euthanize animals with multiple severe abscesses.

**Summary:**
In addition to all the cases cited above, producers must assess each animal based on its individual state of health prior to making a decision to load it or not, and whether it should go to an auction or directly to a processing plant. Animals must only be loaded if they are assessed to be fit at the farm and able to withstand the journey to its destination.
IT IS A VIOLATION TO:

■ Transport a sick or injured animal where undue suffering will result, or when the animal is liable to give birth.

■ Continue to transport an animal that is injured, becomes ill, or is otherwise unfit to travel.

■ Load or unload animals in a way that would cause injury or undue suffering.

■ Crowd animals to such an extent as to cause injury or undue suffering.

■ Transport animals if injury or suffering is likely to be caused by inadequate construction of the vehicle, insecure fittings, undue exposure to the weather or inadequate ventilation.

■ Use ramps, gangplanks or chutes that are inadequately constructed or maintained and would be likely to cause injury or undue suffering to the animals.

■ Confine monogastric animals, such as horses and pigs, in a motor vehicle for longer than 36 hours unless the animals are fed, watered and rested on a vehicle that is suitably equipped for the purpose. Ruminants may not be confined in a transport vehicle without food, water or rest for more than 48 hours, unless final destination can be reached within 52 hours.

■ Transport young calves (not on grain/hay diets) longer than 18 hours without suitable food and water.

■ Load an animal for a trip of more than 24 hours without first providing food and water within 5 hours before loading.

YOU MUST:

■ Segregate animals of different species, of substantially different weights and ages, or if incompatible by nature.

■ Allow animals to stand in a natural position.

■ Provide for drainage and absorption of urine.

■ Either spread sand or have the vehicle fitted with safe footholds in addition to adequate bedding.

■ Ensure that animals unloaded for feed, water and rest remain at least 5 hours, and longer, if necessary, for all of the animals to have access to feed and water.

CRIMINAL CODE OF CANADA

The Criminal Code states you are guilty of an offence if you:

■ Fail to exercise reasonable care or supervision of an animal thereby causing it pain, suffering, damage or injury.

■ Willfully cause or allow unnecessary pain, suffering, or injury to an animal.

■ By willful neglect cause injury to animals while they are being transported.

■ Abandon an animal or fail to provide it with enough suitable food, water, shelter and care.
ONTARIO SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS ACT

Inspectors and agents appointed under the Act have the authority of police officers when enforcing laws pertaining to the welfare of animals. The Ontario SPCA operates on a complaint basis.

- Where an inspector or agent of the Society observes an animal in immediate distress, he or she may enter, without warrant, any premises, building or place other than a dwelling either alone or accompanied by a veterinarian.
- Animals are considered to be in distress if they are in need of proper care, water, food or shelter or being injured, sick or in pain, suffering or being abused, subject to undue or unnecessary hardship, privation or neglect.
- An inspector or an agent of the Society may order the owner or custodian to: take such action as may be necessary to relieve the animal of its distress; or have the animal examined and treated by a veterinarian at the expense of the owner or custodian.
- An inspector or an agent of the Society may remove an animal from the building or place where it is and transport it to a location where the animal may be provided with food, care or treatment to relieve its distress.
- An inspector or an agent of the Society may destroy an animal: with the consent of the owner; or where veterinarian has examined the animal and has advised that the animal is ill or injured and is incapable of living without suffering.

LIVESTOCK AND LIVESTOCK PRODUCTS ACT

Under The Livestock and Livestock Products Act an inspector may:

- enter any place, premises or vehicle containing or used for the storage or carriage of livestock;
- stop on a highway any vehicle that he or she believes to contain any livestock and inspect the vehicle and any livestock;
- require the production of any books, records or other documents relating to any livestock;
- delay the shipment of any livestock for the time necessary to complete his or her inspection;
- seize and detain any livestock transported in contravention of this Act and require the owner to remove such livestock from the place of detention at the expense of the owner.
Checklist for Fitness for Transport of Cattle

Answer must be “no” for all fields if cattle are to be shipped to livestock community sales. If you answered “yes” to any one field, review “Compromised Cattle” booklet for appropriate action.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>ID#</th>
<th>Body Condition Score 1 or 2</th>
<th>Lameness Score 3-4-5</th>
<th>Arthritis</th>
<th>Cancer Eye</th>
<th>Fever</th>
<th>Abscess</th>
<th>Udder</th>
<th>Other conditions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Identifying cows that are too fat or too thin and taking immediate action helps with disease treatment, milk production, and fertility. It is critical for producers to identify cows with poor body condition scores early to make important treatment or culling decisions in a timely and responsible manner.

The Body Condition Scoring (BCS) system scores animals 1 through 5, from emaciated to fat. Body condition reflects the body fat reserves of the animal which are often not enough during early lactation, when cows get sick, or are fed poor quality or not enough feed.

Ideally all dairy cows should be scored at the beginning and end of their dry period and at least 4 or 5 times during lactation. Cows should be scored both by looking at and handling the backbone, loin and rump areas.

### Body Condition Score 1: Emaciated
The ends of the short ribs are sharp to the touch and together give a prominent shelf-like appearance to the loin. The individual vertebrae of the backbone are prominent. The hook and pin bones are sharply defined. The anal area has receded and the vulva is prominent.

### Body Condition Score 2: Thin
The ends of the short ribs can be felt but they and the individual vertebrae are less visibly prominent. The short ribs do not form as obvious of a shelf effect. The hook and pin bones are prominent but the depression of the thurl region is less severe. The area around the anus is less sunken and the vulva less prominent.

### Body Condition Score 3: Average
The short ribs can be felt by applying slight pressure. The overhanging shelf-like appearance of these bones is gone. The backbone is a rounded ridge and hook and pin bones are round and smoothed over. The anal area is filled out but there is no evidence of fat deposit.

### Body Condition Score 4: Heavy
The individual short ribs can be felt only when firm pressure is applied. Together they are rounded over with no shelf effect. The ridge of the backbone is flattening over the loin and rump areas. The hook bones are smoothed over and the span between the hook bones over the backbone is flat. The area around the pin bones is beginning to show patches of fat deposit.

### Body Condition Score 5: Fat
The bone structure of the topline, hook and pin bones and the short ribs is not visible. Fat deposits around the tailbone and over the ribs are obvious. The thighs curve out, the brisket and flanks are heavy and the chine very round.

Adapted from the OMAFRA Factsheet, “Body Condition Scoring of Dairy Cattle”, 411/10. See it online or order it at 1-877-424-1300. Take an online quiz to try body condition scoring at: www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/livestock/dairy.
Body Condition Scoring for Beef Cattle

Body condition scoring (BCS) can be used to assist producers with balancing feed requirements for beef cattle. It is critical to identify cows with poor body condition scores early to make important treatment or culling decisions in a timely and responsible manner.

The Body Condition Scoring (BCS) system scores animals 1 to 5, from emaciated to fat. Producers should regularly body condition score to identify when animals begin to lose condition or become too fat. Beef cows should score at least 2.5 - 3. Steers should be a BCS of 3 or better during backgrounding and 4 or better during finishing.

Feeding (amount and quality) can be adjusted to meet target scores for stage of production. Cows should be scored both by observing and palpating the backbone, loin and rump areas.

Body Condition Score 1: Emaciated

Ends of short ribs are sharp to the touch, and give a prominent shelf-like appearance to the loin. Individual vertebrae of the backbone are prominent. Hook and pin bones are sharply defined. Anal area receded, vulva prominent.

Body Condition Score 2: Thin

Ends of short ribs can be felt but are less visibly prominent. Short ribs do not form as obvious of a shelf effect. Hook and pin bones are prominent but depression of the region less severe. Area around anus is less sunken, vulva less prominent.

Body Condition Score 3: Average

Short ribs can be felt by applying slight pressure. Overhanging shelf-like appearance is gone. Backbone is a rounded ridge - hook, pin bones are round, smoothed over. Anal area is filled out, but with no evidence of fat deposit.

Body Condition Score 4: Heavy

Short ribs can be felt when firm pressure applied, rounded over with no shelf effect. Ridge of the backbone flattening over the loin, rump, chine areas. Hook bones smoothed over, span between hook bones and backbone is flat. Area around pin bones is beginning to show patches of fat deposit.

Body Condition Score 5: Fat

The bone structure of topline, hook and pin bones and short ribs not visible. Obvious fat deposits around tailbone and over ribs. Thighs curve out, brisket and flanks heavy, chine very round.

Adapted from the OMAFRA Factsheet, “Body Condition Scoring of Beef Cows”.

20
This guide has been produced with the generous support of the BSE Recovery Program Cull Animal Strategy fund, for the beef, dairy and veal producers of Ontario. One of the Ontario Farm Animal Council’s core objectives is to advance responsible farm animal care, and this resource should serve as an excellent tool to help achieve that goal.

Additional copies are available online at: www.ofac.org or by contacting the Ontario Farm Animal Council at (519) 837-1326.

Acknowledgements
This publication was adapted from the publication “Humane Handling of Dairy Cattle; Standards for the Transportation of Unfit Cull Animals”, Western Dairy Science Inc. The authors wish to recognize the contributions of Western Dairy Science Inc. for their generosity in sharing the spirit of their publication and the excellent artistic renderings of Julie Popowicz.

The authors also wish to thank Ontario Pork & Alberta Pork for providing a template for this publication from their comparable booklets for pigs.

Thanks to the Ontario Humane Transport Working Group members for reviewing this booklet.

Special thanks to the OMAFRA staff who assisted with the development of this booklet: Penny Lawlis, Nancy Noecker, Craig Richardson and Gerrit Rietveld.

Disclaimer
This guide is intended to assist producers in making ethical and responsible decisions regarding animals at risk. Producers are encouraged to consult with their herd health veterinarian for final culling decisions, as this guide should not be considered as the sole resource in these matters.

The authors do not make any representations, warranties or conditions, either express or implied, with respect to any of the information contained in this guide.

The information is offered entirely at the risk of the recipient and, as the recipient assumes full responsibility, the authors shall not be liable for any claims, damages or losses of any kind based on any theory of liability arising out of the use of or reliance upon this information (including omissions, inaccuracies, typographical errors and infringement of third party rights).

December 2005
DEFINITIONS

ANIMAL WELFARE:
Animals must be thriving and free from disease, injury and malnutrition. Welfare implies freedom from suffering in the sense of prolonged pain, fear, distress, discomfort, hunger, thirst and other negative experiences. Short-term negative states, such as short-term pain, hunger and anxiety, are virtually inevitable in animal life, and the difference between acceptable and unacceptable standards will remain a source of debate.

ANIMAL AT RISK OR COMPROMISED ANIMAL:
An animal with reduced capacity to withstand the stress of living or transportation due to injury, fatigue, infirmity, poor health, distress, very young or old age, impending birth or any other cause.

DISTRESS:
Distress may include: lack of food, water and shelter, lack of proper care of sick or injured animals, pain or suffering due to abuse or unnecessary hardship, deprivation or neglect.

EUTHANASIA:
A humane acceptable method of killing an animal with minimal fear or anxiety. The chosen method must be reliable, reproducible, irreversible, simple, safe and rapid. Refer to OMAF infosheet “On-farm Euthanasia of Cattle and Calves” for more details.

PAIN:
An unpleasant sensation occurring in varying degrees of severity as a result of injury or disease. Signs of pain and suffering may include one or more of the following:
• Unwillingness to rise to its feet
• Unwillingness to walk
• Reluctant to put a leg on the ground and bear weight.
• Mouth open, breathing fast.
• Arched back and abdomen tucked up.
• Head down, ears drooping
• Unwilling to eat or drink.
• Standing separate from group, not following group.
• No response when touched or prodded

SUFFERING:
An unpleasant physical state associated with more-than-minimal pain or distress.

UNFIT:
An animal that is sick, injured, disabled or fatigued, is unfit and cannot be moved without avoidable suffering. This animal must not be loaded for transport.
The Ontario Farm Animal Council represents Ontario’s 40,000 livestock and poultry farmers and associated businesses on the issues of animal agriculture.

www.ofac.org