

Farmed Animal Transport Welfare Policy Requirements

Ninety-seven percent of Canadians say it is important for animals to be transported in a humane manner that addresses their needs. Ninety-five percent of Canadians maintain this stance, even if that means more expensive meat. Mercy For Animals supports and advocates for policies that at a minimum comply with the internationally recognized Five Freedoms¹ for animals. Accordingly, Mercy For Animals urges the Canadian government to include the following requirements in its farmed animal transport regulations.

1. Unless food and water are provided on board, **confinement to a transport vehicle must not exceed eight hours**, after which period animals must be rested for 24 hours with food and water. Very young animals may not be confined to a transport vehicle for longer than four hours.
2. **Temperatures within transport vehicles must be kept between 5–30°C** and animals protected from precipitation and sun.
3. Species-specific stocking densities should allow animals to **lie down if they wish, thermoregulate effectively, and assume natural postures and movement**. Mixing of animals who may cause harm to one another must be prohibited. Mutilation of animals in preparation for transport must be prohibited.
4. Transport vehicles must be **designed to avoid injury and suffering** and should include hydraulic lifting systems or ramps with slopes less than 20 degrees.
5. To prevent additional suffering, **animals with compromised health must not be transported**.
6. **Feed deprivation prior to transport must be prohibited**, with the exception of pigs, who should be fasted four hours prior to transport.
7. **Transport companies must meet strict training requirements** to be licensed to transport animals. Careful handling of animals by workers should be encouraged over fast pace with incentives for farms and transport companies whose animal shipments have the lowest DOA numbers.
8. **A zero tolerance policy for animal abuse must be established**.

For journeys **over eight hours**, all animals must have access to **onboard food and water** sufficient for double the planned journey length. Provided that requirements 2–8 are met, cattle, sheep, and horses may be confined to a transport vehicle for up to 24 hours and poultry may be confined up to 12 hours.