

Animals in Transit Protocol

Version:	10 (2023-MAR-31) - DRAFT
Prepared by:	Animal Health Emergency Management (AHEM) Project
Protocol Implemented by:	Appropriate Livestock Organization
Intended audience:	Livestock Industry Association Staff
Accompanying Document(s):	Nonessential Movement Protocol

1. Summary

- The **Animals in Transit Protocol** provides a consistent process that can be followed when livestock movement restrictions are deemed necessary prior to the implementation of control zones.
- The Protocol relates to animals that are in transit.
- Once a Nonessential Movement Protocol is initiated, the continuation of livestock movement will be defined as per this **Animals in Transit Protocol**.
- This protocol guides industry in their efforts to limit/prevent the spread of a serious animal health disease, to reduce broader, sector-wide risks, and to protect the health and welfare of animals in transit.

2. Scope

- This protocol will provide destination options for animals that are in transit when livestock movement restrictions are deemed necessary.
- While remaining in compliance with the requirements within the CFIA [Health of Animals Regulations \(Part XII\) Transport of Animals](#), this protocol will provide options that support transporters and those with liability for vehicle contents.
- The owner of the livestock must clearly understand that there will be costs not covered by federal or provincial legislation, associated with implementing the Nonessential Movement Protocol, and subsequently protocols for managing animals in transit. Producers are encouraged to work with their respective livestock associations, and provincial and federal government agencies to ensure that permissible costs are reimbursed via recovery programs.

3. Application

- Affected species will be defined in the list of susceptible species in the CFIA [Hazard Specific Plan](#) for the disease suspected. It is understood that each of the affected livestock associations would have invoked a **Nonessential Movement Protocol** for their own sector.
- The livestock owners should work directly with the livestock transporters to coordinate appropriate actions.
- This protocol addresses a wide array of options associated with livestock in transit to and from different points of origin and destinations.
- The size of the geographic area and the extent of the value chain impact should be based on risk estimation. Individual jurisdictions may impose additional transport movement restrictions based on perceived risk.

4. Protocol Trigger

- Implementation of movement restrictions through enactment of a **Nonessential Movement Protocol** by an industry association, or a request from the provincial or federal chief veterinary officer.
- This notification process should be clearly defined as part of the contingency plan between the transport company and the owners of the animals.
- The livestock association lead(s) should communicate relevant information to the provincial CVO and CFIA.

5. Pre-Outbreak Considerations: Preparedness Activities

Risk Assessment Considerations ([Appendix 1 - Risk Estimation for Animals in Transit](#))

- The 'risk assessment' for various situations and appropriate procedures for rapid estimation of risk for each available option should be developed prior to an outbreak. In the face of an outbreak, there will not be time to complete these detailed tasks.
- A method for estimating the risk posed by various movements should be developed for use at the time the suspicion is reported.
 - An estimation of the risk posed by each category of animals in transit must be conducted by the lead(s) of an industry association prior to giving any guidance/direction to allow further movement of livestock and/or livestock items.
- Key factors to consider:
 - Risk of the animals in transit having a serious animal disease (e.g., higher risk if associated with animals and/or products from the area where a serious animal disease is suspected or confirmed).
 - Likelihood of disease spread because of any exemptions.
 - Consequences of the introduction of the serious animal disease (e.g., high economic and/or epidemiological impact outcomes should be avoided, such as movements to areas, premises, property situations where there is a high livestock density or congregations of susceptible species (e.g., finishing lots or aggregation sites).
 - Actual capacity for recommended risk mitigation measures (e.g., isolation facilities, quarantine and surveillance, adequate biosecurity).
- The risk estimation should consider all aspects of returning the livestock to the premises of origin versus moving them to another destination (including the intended destination).
- Movement options should consider:
 - Welfare implications (e.g., transport times and class of stock).
 - Value of animals (e.g., owners of high-value animals may wish to hold them on an approved premises rather than redirecting them to an abattoir); and
 - Regulatory implications beyond agriculture (e.g., road transport legislation, driver's hours).
- Procedures should be in place for communication with applicable regulatory authorities when the movement originated from or is destined for another jurisdiction. These authorities will need to be consulted in the risk estimation. NOTE: if the movement involves international borders CFIA is the lead agency.

6. Description of Activities

- It is vital that animal transport companies consider animal welfare. Being prepared with a clear contingency plan and communication strategies will safeguard the animals and help the company remain commercially agile during unforeseen transport challenges.

Determine and Agree Upon Pre-Approved Lairage Sites ([Appendix 2 - Animals in Transit Agreed upon Lairage Sites](#))

- For this Animals in Transit Protocol, pre-arranged aggregation sites will be termed **lairage**.
- It is important to identify potential physical locations where animals could be housed for 72 hours. Animals should not be commingled with other animals – unless the animals are en route to the same destination there must be the separation of animals.

- It may not be possible to move animals to the intended destination or return them to their origin. It is essential to have sites identified ahead of time where truckers can go to ensure the animals will be cared for without increasing the risk of disease spread or animal welfare concerns.
- It is understood that some of these lairage facilities will be existing aggregation sites or auction markets. These commercial enterprises are not typically in the business of being emergency holding facilities.
- As a result, there would be a need to develop a set of ‘mutual aid agreements’ where specific minimum conditions could be established, costs could be identified, and roles and responsibilities clearly defined so that existing facilities can be leveraged as part of a lairage network.
- These conditions and mutual aid agreements would have to be established with abattoirs for any livestock *not already scheduled for delivery* during this period.
- Refer to the **AHEM Mutual Aid Agreement Development Guidance Document** for information on developing an agreement.

Activation/Response ([Appendix 3 - Animals in Transit Reference Guide](#))

- Assess the situation.
- Estimate the risk associated with each type of species that is in transit.
- When the **Nonessential Movement Protocol** is implemented, movement of livestock to or from premises is discouraged, unless defined under exceptions in the **Nonessential Movement Protocol** and accompanied by the related movement permissions.
- Industry notification to stakeholders will be through the affected provincial livestock association. Notification would follow the association’s established communication protocol. NOTE: it is assumed that either the association would already have a communication protocol prepared OR that they would want to prepare one immediately upon implementing this protocol.
- Communications should include an explanation for the reasons for the directions provided to transporters.

Lifting of the Animal in Transit Protocol

- Once all livestock have been accommodated following the initiation of an event, this protocol has no further application.

7. Further Considerations

Although contingency plans should be defined in advance, there may be circumstances when the plans cannot be followed. In this case, the transporter should work with industry stakeholders to ensure that the journey can be completed in an acceptable number of hours from the declaration of a stop movement as per the transportation regulations in the *Health of Animal Regulations* and the movement is guided by the following principles:

- Animals can move from lower risk to higher risk, although this limits future movements (do not move from higher-risk or potentially exposed context to lower risk context), and
- Animals can move from premises to premises if both have a similar risk of having been already exposed to the disease agent.

Destination

- Livestock may be moved to an abattoir when there is a negotiated acceptance agreement as well as capacity. This should occur as soon as possible and such that animals are maintained humanely until they can be processed.
- In all cases where movement is permitted other than for the abattoir, the livestock should be isolated and the person in charge instructed to contact the jurisdictional regulatory authority/private veterinarian to report any signs of disease.

Travel Route

Association should develop guidance on specific transport routes that could be considered while ensuring compliance with *Health of Animals Regulations: Part XII: Transport of Animals*.

Low-risk routes, as defined, considering the risk assessment considerations in [Appendix 1](#), should be used and any stopovers proactively managed to reduce risk. All stakeholders must confirm that road closures/restrictions will not force deviation from the identified low-risk routes.

APPENDIX 1 – RISK ESTIMATION FOR ANIMALS IN TRANSIT

This risk estimation is designed to guide decision-makers in determining where animals in transit should be directed e.g., continue to the destination, return to the premise of origin, or redirect to lairage.

Estimation of risk					Impact		Management Considerations
<p>1) What is the likelihood that animals have the disease or have been exposed to the disease</p> <p>Negligible, very low, low, moderate, high</p> <p>Example (FMD in cattle)</p> <p>The likelihood of the animals having been exposed to the virus is moderate</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The animals to be moved are located 8 km from the suspect premises The premises has no 'relationship' with the suspect premises Cattle do not excrete as much virus via the respiratory tract as pigs 	<p>2) What is the likelihood of exposing susceptible species to the disease agent while animals are in transit</p> <p>Negligible, very low, low, moderate, high</p> <p>Example</p> <p>The likelihood of spreading the disease while being transported is very low</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The amount of virus shed by cattle via the respiratory tract is relatively low (compared to pigs) Bedding is used in the trailer to prevent leakage of feces and urine 	<p>3) What is the likelihood of transmission of the disease agent to other susceptible animals at destination</p> <p>Negligible, very low, low, moderate, high</p> <p>Example</p> <p>The likelihood of spread at slaughter plant is moderate</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Animals may be co-mingled with animals from other sources No live animals leave the facility The conveyances are cleaned before leaving the premises 	<p>Overall Estimated Risk Likelihood of infection (A) + likelihood of exposure (B) + likelihood of transmission (C)</p> <p>Negligible, very low, low, moderate, high</p> <p><i>Consider the three likelihoods – the overall likelihood of spread via a movement is equal to the lowest estimated risk assigned</i></p> <p>In this example the overall estimated risk is very low</p>	<p>What is the potential impact on the local, regional, and national industry if spread occurs</p> <p>Indiscernible, minor, significant, severe</p> <p>Example</p> <p>Minor</p> <p>No contamination of other production units</p> <p>Premises can be cleaned and disinfected using routine procedures</p> <p>Export restrictions on all products produced that day</p>	<p>What is the potential impact on the animal, local, regional, national industry if the commodity if it is not moved</p> <p>Indiscernible, minor, significant, severe</p> <p>Example:</p> <p>Minor</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Animals can remain on the site for a few weeks – rations may need to be adjusted to limit weight gain. Animals can be sourced from other parts of the province/ country to meet market demand 	<p>Can appropriate actions be taken to reduce the risk for disease spread during transport and lessen the impacts?</p> <p>If yes list the required actions</p> <p>Example</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> To further reduce the risk of spreading animals can be transported via routes that do not come within 2 km of premises with susceptible animals Trucks will undergo enhanced cleaning and disinfection between loads 	

LIKELIHOOD	DESCRIPTIVE DEFINITION
Negligible	The likelihood of the event is virtually zero
Very low	The event is very unlikely
Low	The event is unlikely
Moderate	The event is likely
High	The event is highly likely

IMPACT	DESCRIPTIVE DEFINITION
Indiscernible	Not usually distinguishable from normal day-to-day variation
Minor	Recognizable, but insignificant and/or reversible
Significant	Serious, but can be reversible and lower likelihood to have permanent economic effects
Severe	Serious and substantive, irreversible and highly likely to have permanent economic effects

APPENDIX 2 – ANIMALS IN TRANSIT AGREED UPON LAIRAGE SITES

Use this to identify potential physical locations where animals could be housed for 72 hours. We recommended you develop a set of 'mutual aid agreements' where specific minimum conditions could be established, costs could be identified, and roles and responsibilities clearly defined. Refer to the AHEM Mutual Aid Agreement Development Guidance Document.

Name of Lairage ¹ Point	GIS Coordinates/ Location of Point	Livestock Capacity at Lairage Point	Contact Information	Considerations

¹ For this protocol, pre-arranged aggregation sites will be termed lairage. Some of these lairage facilities will be existing aggregation sites or auction markets. These commercial enterprises are not typically in the business of being emergency holding facilities.

APPENDIX 3 - ANIMALS IN TRANSIT REFERENCE GUIDE

This information guides industry in its efforts to limit the introduction/spread of a serious animal health disease, to reduce broader, sector-wide risks, and to protect the health and welfare of animals in transit.

Animals can move from lower risk to higher risk, although this limits future movements (do not move from higher-risk or potentially exposed context to lower risk context).

The following colour coding generally suggests: **GREEN** – proceed to intended destination; **ORANGE** – do not proceed to intended destination; **GREY** – not likely to occur. NOTE: We have also identified additional options for consideration where potentially feasible.

		INTENDED DESTINATION				
ORIGIN OF LIVESTOCK		FARM(S)	AGGREGATION POINT OR AUCTION ¹	SHOW / EXHIBITION	EXPORT DESTINATION	ABATTOIR
FARM (Single farm origin or those farms within a 'loop system')			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Return to origin Redirect to confirmed lairage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Return to origin Redirect to confirmed lairage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Return to origin Redirect to confirmed lairage 	
FARMS (Multiple farms of origin and those farms outside a loop)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proceed to the destination if they have sufficient segregation facilities. Redirect to confirmed lairage² Redirect to abattoir 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Redirect to confirmed lairage Redirect to abattoir 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Redirect to confirmed lairage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Redirect to confirmed lairage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Redirect to confirmed lairage 	
AGGREGATION POINT OR AUCTION ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proceed to the destination if they have sufficient segregation facilities. Redirect to confirmed lairage Redirect to abattoir 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Redirect to confirmed lairage Redirect to abattoir 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Redirect to confirmed lairage Redirect to abattoir 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Redirect to confirmed lairage 	
SHOW / EXHIBITION (or other congregation of susceptible livestock)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proceed to the destination if they have sufficient segregation facilities. Redirect to confirmed lairage Redirect to abattoir 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Redirect to confirmed lairage Redirect to abattoir 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Redirect to confirmed lairage Redirect to abattoir 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Redirect to another show/exhibition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Redirect to confirmed lairage 	
EXPORT ORIGIN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assumes that the destination farm would have sufficient segregation facilities to accept these animals in the first place 					

1 Aggregation Sites or Auctions are existing commercial businesses in the region that routinely assemble animals.

2 Lairage – negotiated holding area for animals captured under this protocol. This likely includes specific aggregation sites or auctions, but they would have to have agreed to be a lairage through a pre-existing arrangement. Not all aggregation sites or auctions will be defined as lairage locations.