



## Animal Transport Regulations in Canada and the EU

### Background

Canada's current animal transport regulations were introduced in 1977, 41 years ago. They allow for the longest travelling times in the industrialised world. As an example, ruminants such as cattle, sheep or goats, can be transported for up to 52 hours, without any rest or access to water or food. In the case of horses, poultry and pigs, the maximum allowed is 36 hours. In all cases, there must be five hours of feed withdrawal before the start of the journey. Around 770 million animals are transported each year in Canada, in outdated vehicles, facing freezing temperatures in winters, heat in the summer, dehydration, trampling and diseases. Around 14 million arrive dead, dying or injured at federally inspected slaughterhouses.

In December 2016 the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) published a draft update of the transport regulations. According to the CFIA itself, "the current provisions [on animal transport] do not reflect current science regarding the care and handling of animals, do not align with the standards of Canada's international trading partners, and are not aligned with the World Organization for Animal Health welfare standards for animals transported by land, air and sea. This leads to a continuing risk that animals will suffer during transportation." However, since the drafting of the updated regulations began in 2013, industry lobbying industry has been intense, focussing on the potential negative impact for businesses. In the draft regulations that were published in 2016, the CFIA increased the travelling times from those it had proposed in 2013 that it had based on its own scientific analysis.<sup>1</sup> At the time of writing, these draft regulations have not yet been turned into law and the 41-year old rules are still the reference used to transport animals every day in Canada.

#### Feed, water and rest intervals during transportation of animals

In hours

● Proposed in 2013 ● Proposed in 2016 ● Current regulations

Day old chicks



24

72

Beef and dairy cattle



28

36

52

Spent laying hens



12

24

36

THE GLOBE AND MAIL, SOURCE: CANADIAN FOOD INSPECTION AGENCY

Enforcement is also the responsibility of the CFIA: internal documents have shown that inspections have only been carried out in five provinces (British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island), and that even when the transporters were described as not respecting the rules, most of the time they received approval to pursue their journey. Stricter criteria seem to be enforced for exported animals<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Revealed by internal documents obtained through an Access to Information request -

<https://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/cfia-bows-to-meat-industry-on-animal-transport-rules-documents-s-how/article34333265/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.thestar.com/opinion/star-columnists/2018/09/18/poor-enforcement-of-animal-transport-rules.html>



Documents have revealed that in Canada exposure, heat and cold, as well as inadequate ventilation, are the top three criteria of non-compliance. In spite of these results, the updated animal transport regulations proposed by Canada do not set any rules for transport temperatures, while in the EU a minimum and maximum temperature range of 5-30 degrees is set by law.

## Our call to the European Commission

*On 14 December, the European Commission and the Canadian authorities will discuss the transportation of animals in the framework of the Regulatory Cooperation Forum (RCF) set up by the EU-Canada Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA). The **objectives of this voluntary mechanism includes the protection of animal life**<sup>3</sup> and can be pursued by carrying activities such as “exchanging information, expertise and experience in the field of animal welfare in order to promote collaboration on animal welfare between the Parties”.*

*The EU is often portrayed as a **global leader in the field of animal welfare**. In its efforts to promote higher standards around the globe, it often favours a cooperative approach, similar to the tools adopted in CETA, like the RCF, praising the effectiveness of such approach in providing long term progress for animals.*

**In that context, we call on the European Commission to make full use of the channel provided by the EU-Canada RCF to discuss with Canada the dangerous evolution that has occurred between the two drafts of its updated animal transport regulations. Canada should not adopt these overly lengthy travelling times, that are contradicted by its own scientific assessments.**<sup>4</sup>

As recalled by Canadian NGOs in a letter sent to the Ministry of Agriculture and Agri-food in March 2018, “it is unacceptable for the regulations to prioritize economic interests over animal care”.<sup>5</sup> Canada has recognised the low level of its animal transport standards compared to those of its main international trading partners, notably the EU. In the EU, transportation time is in theory limited to 8 hours and transporters have to abide by additional compulsory requirements for longer journeys. The 52 hour maximum journey time without any access to water, food and rest set by the Canadian law is not only very far from EU legislative standards, but is also incompatible with the EU legislative principle that “animals must not be transported in a way likely to cause injury or undue suffering to them”. Despite the existing cases of non-compliance, the EU Transport Regulation (ref. leg. 1/2005) has improved the conditions of animals transported alive across the EU and recently **the EU institutions have been investing significant resources in tackling violations and effectively improving transport conditions. EU citizens are deeply concerned** about transport conditions and private schemes ensuring stricter limitation in terms of transport time are flourishing on the EU market.

**Thus the EU must make it clear that the current situation is unacceptable** and that the **draft updated regulations** that are on the table **do not constitute sufficient progress**. New Canadian regulations must be based on the vast body of scientific evidence available in relation to animal well-being.

---

<sup>3</sup> Article 21.3 (a) of the EU-Canada Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement

<sup>4</sup> For instance, the 12-hour maximum journeys recommended by scientists for spent hens got increased to 24-hour journeys

<sup>5</sup> Letter sent by 20 NGOs on 20 March 2018, retrieved on <http://animaltransportcanada.ca/MacAulay%20letter.pdf>