

# International Standards for Transporting Cattle and Their Effect on Animal Welfare

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Canadian standards concerning the welfare of cattle during transport were compared to that of the USA, Australia, New Zealand and the European Union (EU). Literature was examined to determine the degree to which standards were supported by scientific research pertaining to eight main issues: 1. Non-ambulatory animals, 2. Suitability of young and pregnant animals, 3. Pre-transport management, 4. Loading and unloading, 5. Temperature and ventilation, 6. Loading density, 7. Journey duration and deprivation of food and water, and 8. Resting periods and revitalisation strategy.

Standards vary greatly between regions. Despite receiving a great deal of scientific attention, recommendations about journey duration and the subsequent deprivation of food and water are inconsistent; for instance, large differences exist between maximum journey durations for Canada (52 h) and Australia (48 h) versus the EU (16 h). Other transportation concerns, such as loading densities, are more consistent between regions and have better scientific support. The review also identifies scientific gaps in which research is needed in order to achieve more standardized recommendations world-wide.

**Implications:** As interest in the welfare of transported cattle has risen, so has the need for internationally comparable, scientifically-based guidelines to facilitate international trade. The review incorporates world-wide standards and scientific literature as a major step towards providing producers realistic, welfare-friendly transport guidelines.