



CANADIAN
CATTLEMEN'S
ASSOCIATION

National Voice Of Cattle Producers

Statement

CCA concerned new Animal Transport Regulations will undermine cattle welfare rather than enhance it

February 20, 2019

Calgary, AB – Proper cattle care and welfare are paramount in the Canadian beef industry. The cattle industry's objective is for animals under transport to arrive successfully at their destination in good health and condition, without injury and while minimizing stress. Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) research shows that 99.95 per cent of cattle on long-haul journeys reach their destination in good condition.

While the intent of the revised Health of Animals – Transport Regulations published today is presumably to seek improvements in the remaining 0.05 per cent, the Canadian Cattlemen's Association (CCA) anticipates the revisions will likely increase stress to cattle and opportunity for injury. This is mostly due to the changes in regulations requiring more loading and unloading for rest stops.

The CCA questions why the revised regulations ignore the Government of Canada's own research and why they were released prior to the completion of ongoing research that would inform a decision on how to change the regulations to ensure the best outcomes for animal care. This research, funded in part by AAFC, will collect data through 2021 and is being conducted using commercial cattle, transport trailers, and drivers under typical commercial distances and conditions in Canada, as it is important to base regulations on directly relatable conditions and scenarios. This research will inform science-based industry best practices to ensure animal welfare is safeguarded during transport.

Further, the regulations have disregarded recommendations made by cattle producers drawing from years of practical hands-on expertise in handling and minimizing stress on their animals. These and other recommendations were included in the [CCA's extensive comments, questions and recommendations](#) submitted during the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) review process and to the [Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food](#).

The CCA has continuously demonstrated leadership in animal welfare, particularly when it comes to understanding the effects transportation has on cattle, and will continue to do so. The CCA will be analyzing the revised regulations document in full and will continue to engage the Government of Canada on our concerns about the animal welfare implications of these regulations before they come into effect next year.

We believe the revised regulations are premature and incomplete. To ensure proper process, specific proposals need to be researched to understand how they affect the wellbeing of the animal. Without fully evaluating unknowns such as the stress of unloading and reloading versus the stress of completing the journey, the effects of temperature, trailer design, loading densities as well as whether rest stops do, in fact, relieve stress, the Government is taking a risky approach with the revised regulations that we anticipate will move industry's good record away from, rather than closer to, 100 per cent.

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The CCA is the national voice for Canada's beef cattle industry representing 60,000 beef farms and feedlots.

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