

**Guide to
the Humane
Care, Handling and
Transportation of**

Sheep

ASWC Mission Statement

The mandate of the Alberta Sheep & Wool Commission (ASWC) is to initiate, support and conduct programs to stimulate and improve the economic well being of the Alberta sheep industry. This is accomplished through industry promotion, development of quality assurance programs, extension, and education services to producers and through research development programs. The ASWC also takes an active industry liaison role to all levels of government.

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Standards For Humane Care

All livestock producers encounter a sick, lame or physically unfit animal during the production cycle. Alberta sheep producers recognize compassion to be a priority in dealing with these special animals. The public agrees and has gone to great lengths to make their views known.

Federal and provincial laws have been enacted to prevent cruelty to all animals, including livestock. Producers, shippers, transporters, receivers and processors must adhere to these comprehensive regulations in order to preserve the integrity of livestock production in Canada.

Alberta sheep producers remain committed to supplying the best care and protection to their flocks in order to maintain these expectations.

Purpose of the book

Objective:

This handbook provides sheep producers, handlers, transporters and processors the information needed in order to make a decision involving the humane handling or relocation of sick, injured or physically unfit sheep in any situation.

This handbook reflects a standard of care and responsibility that is considered acceptable in Alberta and amongst its trading partners.

This handbook will be referenced by enforcement authorities and held up as a baseline for acceptable handling practices across the province.

Definitions

Animal rights	A philosophy based on the belief that animals have the same rights as humans and therefore are not to be used as a source of materials or put to work.
Animal welfare	A state in which an animal's individual needs are met for nutrition, shelter, health and the ability to express natural behaviour, and in which it is free from undue pain and suffering.
body condition	Assessment of muscle / fat / tissue on the animal; scored 1-5; 1 being very thin, 5 being fat.
chronic disease	Condition that can't be cured.
distress	A condition in which an animal experiences excessive fear, pain or anxiety.
downer	An animal that cannot rise, stand or walk without assistance.
lame	Obvious limping when moving, or favoring a leg when standing.
lameness classes	#1 - Can rise and walk with ease but shows distinct limp on one leg. #2 - Can rise and walk with a limp but has a hard time keeping up to the flock. #3 - Downer - cannot rise, remain standing or walk without assistance. Refuses to put weight on affected limb. May show signs of pain (trembling, grinding teeth).
pain	Physical or mental suffering, extreme discomfort. Signs of pain include trembling, rapid breathing, grinding of teeth.
prolapse	Distended vagina, rectum or uterus.
relocation	To move from one place to another, transport.
residue	Detectable sign of a pharmaceutical in carcass tissue post-slaughter.
salvageable	Fit for human consumption, able to be slaughtered.
stress	Pressure or strain on the body.
unfit, compromised	An animal with reduced capacity to withstand the stress of transportation, due to injury, fatigue, infirmity, poor health, distress, very young or old age, impending birth, or any other cause. Fractured limbs, fractures to the pelvis, or any other fractures that considerably hamper mobility or are likely to cause severe pain when the animal is manipulated for loading or when it is being transported. (source - CFIA).

Tendering Sheep For Transport

Responsibility

The LAW

 Federal law (*Health of Animals Act – Part 12*) says “*whoever loads or causes to be loaded*” may be held liable in case there are any problems with the transportation of livestock.

- Rely on your knowledge of the federal and provincial regulations regarding livestock transportation to make a decision.
- Consult an experienced and trustworthy person for assistance.

The shipper and/or the transporter and/or the transport company can be charged under the federal *Health of Animals Act* or *Alberta Animal Protection Act* for loading, transporting or improperly unloading an unfit animal (*see Regulatory Information – Appendix 1*).

The Shipper:

is responsible for tendering only animals suitably fit to undergo transport.

The Transporter:

must assess the animals tendered by the shipper and only accept those animals suitably fit to undergo transport.

The Canadian Sheep Identification Program (CSIP)

The Canadian Sheep Identification Program (CSIP) is a mandatory trace back system developed by industry and enforced by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA). As of January 1, 2004 all sheep and lambs must bear an approved CSIP ear tag or identification before they leave the farm of origin.

The CODE

Recommended Code Of Practice for the Care & Handling of Sheep

(The Code is a voluntary, industry-developed document published by the Canadian Agri-Food Research Council)

- 15.1** Each person involved in the handling or transporting of sheep should be properly instructed and knowledgeable about the basic principles of animal welfare and be skilful in handling sheep under varying climatic conditions.

(See Appendix 2 for more excerpts from the Recommended Code of Practice – Sheep)

Evaluating Animal Health

Signs of Distress in Sheep

Physical signs of distress and fear in sheep include:

- Increase in respiration, panting
- Nervous behaviour
- Grinding of teeth
- Pawing the ground
- Increase in obvious size of flight zone

Signs of nutritional distress in sheep include:

- Poor body condition score (1 or 2)
- Poor growth rate
- Poor quality fleece

Body Condition Score

- 1 - poor condition, very thin, emaciated
- 2 - thin
- 3 - OK
- 4 - great shape
- 5 - fat or overfat

Salvageable Animals

When an animal is being tendered for transport to slaughter it must meet or exceed the following list:

- Must be free of drug, vaccine and chemical residue,
- Must not have a temperature above 104.5 degrees F (39C),
- Must have a body condition score of 2 or higher,
- Must be able to walk under its own power.

Condemned at the Processors

Producers and owners will not be paid for animals that are condemned at the processors. A condemned animal may have one or more of the following;

- drug residue from an antibiotic injection or other drug,
- a temperature of above 104.5 or 105 F (40C),
- a body condition score of 1,
- a disease that renders the carcass unfit for human consumption.

Handling & Relocation Options

- **Transport** if animal is fit.
- **Transport Special Provisions** means the trucker must make special provisions within the transport unit such as plenty of bedding, loading the animal in the rear compartment of the unit, or give the animal plenty of room.
- **Direct** - means haul to **nearest suitable abattoir (less than 2 hours away)*.
- **Very Short-haul** - under 30 minutes.
- **Short-haul** - under 4 hours.
- **Long-haul** - over 4 hours.
- **Vet Transport** - *Transport Special Provisions* to and from the nearest appropriate veterinary facility for treatment.
- **Rail Grade** - transport direct to **nearest suitable abattoir (less than 2 hours away)*.
- **Emergency rail** – make arrangements with processor to deliver direct very short-haul to **nearest suitable abattoir (less than 2 hours away)*.
- **On-farm slaughter** – the animal must be veterinary inspected while still alive in order for the meat to be sold. If the meat is to be used by the producer the live animal or carcass does not need to be inspected.
- **Euthanasia** - the humane termination of the life of an animal. Must be done using accepted industry practices (*see Appendix 4*).

**Nearest suitable abattoir* – a facility less than 2 hours away and provides assurances that the animal will be killed within 24 hours.

Transportation and Handling Do's & Don'ts

Do

- Transport only fit sheep. Assess the health of the animals before you load them.
- Divide the sheep into compartments on the truck to avoid piling up, which may result in death. Compartments should not be longer than 3.1m (10 feet).
- Remember that sheep are docile and are not prone to show outward signs of stress & pain. That doesn't mean they aren't experiencing it.
- Give them enough room in the compartment to stand up if they fall down.
- Provide sufficient ventilation in the transport vehicle.

DO NOT

- ... lift sheep by the horns, head, ears, tail, or grab them by the fleece.
- ... load from a ramp exceeding 35° or having steps higher than 38 cm (15").
- delay the movement of the truck. Organize the paperwork and go.

Do NOT Transport*

*unless to the nearest appropriate veterinary facility for treatment - must be loaded humanely
Alberta Animal Protection Regulation - Appendix 1

Animal Health Condition	Reference Codes (see chart below)
Arthritis (lameness class 2)	
Bloat	
Broken leg	A C
Downer	
Hot & Stressed	
Hypocalcemia	
Mastitis (painful stages)	
Metritis	
Open Wounds (unhealed)	
Pneumonia	
Polio	
Poor Body Condition (score of 1) <i>except for emergency recovery</i>	
Pregnancy Toxemia	
Prolapse – rectal & vaginal (serious), or uterine	A C
Recently Tail Docked or Castrated	

Transport ONLY With Special Provisions*

*unless to the nearest appropriate veterinary facility for treatment – *Alberta Animal Protection Act, Appendix 1*

Arthritis (lameness class 1)	A B C F
Cold & Wet	E
Contagious ecthyma (ORF)	A B
Entropion	A B
Flystrike	A B
Footrot (lameness class 1)	A B F
Footrot (lameness class 2)	A B C F
Freshly Sheared (transported in cool or cold weather)	E
Listeriosis	A
Mastitis (chronic, non-painful stages)	A B
Orchitis (non-painful stage)	A B
Ovine Progressive Pneumonia (OPP – Maede Visa)	B
Prolapse - rectal (not serious, retracting)	A B C F
Very Young	DE

Reference Codes

Options available for loading, transporting, choosing a destination, protecting animal health and maintaining food quality.

A	Only if condition is stabilized and animal is in no obvious pain
B	Only if animal is fit for human consumption
C	If kept separate and allowed to lie in bedded compartment
D	If segregated from mature animals
E	If transported in a bedded compartment with shelter from the wind
F	Must be transported direct to nearest appropriate abattoir for slaughter within 24 hours

Common Animal Health Problems Contributing To Unfit Sheep

Arthritis

Bloat

Broken Leg, Downer

Cold & Wet

Contagious Ecthyma (ORF)

Entropion

Flystrike

Freshly Sheared

Footrot

Hot & Stressed

Hypocalcemia (milk fever)

Listeriosis

Mastitis

Metritis

Orchitis (rams)

Open Wounds (dog bite, predator attack)

Ovine Progressive Pneumonia (OPP)

Pneumonia

Polio

Poor Body Condition

Pregnancy Toxemia

Prolapse (rectal, vaginal, uterine)

Recently Tail Docked or Castrated

Very Young



Arthritis

Check Points

- painful affliction of joints
- lameness in hips, knees, feet



Management Options

- transport direct at onset (lameness class 1)
- do not transport advanced case (lameness class 2)

Lameness Classes

#1 - Can rise and walk with ease but shows distinct limp on one leg.

#2 - Can rise and walk with a limp but has a hard time keeping up to the flock.

#3 - **Downer** - cannot rise, remain standing or walk without assistance. Refuses to put weight on affected limb. May show signs of pain (trembling, grinding teeth).

Regulations

Health of Animals Act - Part 12 (CFIA)

No person shall load, cause to be loaded, transport or continue to transport an animal that by reason of infirmity, illness, fatigue or any other cause cannot be transported without undue suffering during the expected journey.

Alberta Animal Protection Act

Animals in need of veterinary assistance may be transported to and from the nearest appropriate veterinary facility for treatment – the animal must be loaded humanely.

Bloat



Check Points

- gas buildup in rumen
- left side of abdomen distended

Management Options

- do not transport, condition worsens



Regulations



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Broken leg



Check Points

- obvious or hidden fracture
- may be down, animal has trouble rising
- trembling on affected limb, animal may exhibit signs of pain such as grinding of teeth.

Management Options

- may be transported if condition is stabilized and animal is in no pain.
- must be kept in a separate bedded compartment with room to lie down.



Lameness Classes

#1 - Can rise and walk with ease but shows distinct limp on one leg.

#2 - Can rise and walk with a limp but has a hard time keeping up to the flock.

#3 - **Downer** - cannot rise, remain standing or walk without assistance. Refuses to put weight on affected limb. May show signs of pain (trembling, grinding teeth).

Alberta Sheep Industry Position On Broken Legs & Downers

It is considered inhumane to load a downed animal. A *downer* must be humanely cared for if able to recover or immediately euthanized on-farm.

Regulations

Health of Animals Act - Part 12 (CFIA)

No person shall load, cause to be loaded, transport or continue to transport an animal that by reason of infirmity, illness, fatigue or any other cause cannot be transported without undue suffering during the expected journey.

Food and Drug Act

- Part 1 (4)** No person shall sell an article of food that
- b) is unfit for human consumption

Alberta Animal Protection Act

Animals in need of veterinary assistance may be transported to and from the nearest appropriate veterinary facility for treatment – the animal must be loaded humanely.

Cold & Wet

Check Points

- exposed to inclement weather for an extended period of time
- shivering, hunched back

Management Options

- transport short-haul, special provisions (bedding & wind protection)
- receiver must have facility with protection from elements



Regulations

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Contagious Ecthyma (ORF)



Check Points

- contagious disease, zoonosis
- mouth lesions, coronary band lesions in lambs
- teat lesions in ewes
- nursing becomes painful, eventually discontinued

Management Options

- transmissible to humans, avoid contact
- do not transport unless you consult veterinarian
- transport if condition is stabilized and animal is not in pain
- animal must be fit for human consumption

Regulations

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Downer



Check Points

- down, animal cannot rise, various possible causes

Management Options

- do not load or transport
- consult veterinarian

Lameness Classes

#1 - Can rise and walk with ease but shows distinct limp on one leg.

#2 - Can rise and walk with a limp but has a hard time keeping up to the flock.

#3 - **Downer** - cannot rise, remain standing or walk without assistance. Refuses to put weight on affected limb. May show signs of pain (trembling, grinding teeth).



Alberta Sheep Industry Position On Broken Legs & Downers

It is considered inhumane to load a downed animal. A *downer* must be humanely cared for if able to recover or immediately euthanized on-farm.

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Entropion

Check Points

- inversion of the eyelid
- watery discharge, painful

Management Options

- treat early as a lamb
- may be loaded if condition is stabilized, animal is not in pain
- animal must be fit for human consumption



Regulations

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Flystrike



Check Points

- maggot infestation of open wounds or anal/vaginal areas
- foul smell, animal is distressed and tries to rub or bite the affected area

Management Options

- treat affected animals
- transport only if condition is stabilized and animal is in no pain
- animal must be fit for human consumption

Regulations



Health of Animals Act - Part 12 (CFIA)

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Food and Drug Act

- Part 1 (4)** No person shall sell an article of food that
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Alberta Animal Protection Act



Animals in need of veterinary assistance may be transported to and from the nearest appropriate veterinary facility for treatment – the animal must be loaded humanely.

Freshly Sheared

Check Points

- Less than 3 cm of wool

Management Options

- transport in warm weather
- transport special provisions in cool weather (bedding, wind protection)



Regulations

Health of Animals Act - Part 12 (CFIA)

No person shall load, cause to be loaded, transport or continue to transport an animal that by reason of infirmity, illness, fatigue or any other cause cannot be transported without undue suffering during the expected journey.

Footrot



Check Points

- contagious bacterial infection of the feet
- lameness, swelling, foul smell, refusal to stand

Management Options

- treat
- transport direct if class 1
- transport direct, special provisions if class 2



Lameness Classes

#1 - Can rise and walk with ease but shows distinct limp on one leg.

#2 - Can rise and walk with a limp but has a hard time keeping up to the herd.

#3 - **Downer** - cannot rise, remain standing or walk without assistance. Refuses to put weight on affected limb. May show signs of pain (trembling, grinding teeth).

Regulations



Health of Animals Act - Part 12 (CFIA)

No person shall load, cause to be loaded, transport or continue to transport an animal that by reason of infirmity, illness, fatigue or any other cause cannot be transported without undue suffering during the expected journey.

Alberta Animal Protection Act



Animals in need of veterinary assistance may be transported to and from the nearest appropriate veterinary facility for treatment – the animal must be loaded humanely.

Hot & Stressed

Check Points

- panting, head down
- exhausted



Management Options

- do not transport, death may occur
- postpone transport until animals cool down
- transport at night when ambient temperature is lower
- transport special provisions (more room for ventilation)

Regulations

Health of Animals Act - Part 12 (CFIA)

No person shall load, cause to be loaded, transport or continue to transport an animal that by reason of infirmity, illness, fatigue or any other cause cannot be transported without undue suffering during the expected journey.

Hypocalcemia (milk fever)



Check Points

- metabolic disease of pregnant or lactating ewes, calcium deficiency
- staggers, tremors, stilted gait, unable to rise



Management Options

- do not transport
- consult veterinarian

Regulations

Health of Animals Act - Part 12 (CFIA)

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Alberta Animal Protection Act

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Listeriosis



Check Points

- infectious disease of central nervous system (a.k.a. circling disease)
- disorientation, walking in circles, depression
- partial facial paralysis, drooping ear and eyelid, head turned to one side



Management Options

- consult veterinarian for diagnosis

Regulations

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Alberta Animal Protection Act

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Mastitis



Check Points

- inflammation and infection of udder
- ewe may appear lame in hind leg due to swollen, painful udder

Management Options

- do not transport if showing signs of sickness
- transport direct if chronic swollen bag persists but ewe is not showing signs of sickness or pain
- animal must be fit for human consumption



Regulations



Health of Animals Act - Part 12 (CFIA)

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Food and Drug Act

- Part 1 (4)** No person shall sell an article of food that
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Alberta Animal Protection Act



Animals in need of veterinary assistance may be transported to and from the nearest appropriate veterinary facility for treatment – the animal must be loaded humanely.

Metritis



Check Points

- uterine infection
- fever, lack of appetite, foul discharge from vulva, retained afterbirth

Management Options

- do not transport
- possible condemnation at processors



Regulations



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Alberta Animal Protection Act



Animals in need of veterinary assistance may be transported to and from the nearest appropriate veterinary facility for treatment – the animal must be loaded humanely.

Orchitis (Rams only)



Check Points

- infection of testicle
- swollen, painful testes
- ram may appear lame on hind leg of affected side

Management Options

- consult veterinarian if showing signs of sickness
- transport direct if ram is stable and not showing signs of sickness or pain
- animal must be fit for human consumption

Regulations

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Food and Drug Act

- Part 1 (4)** No person shall sell an article of food that
- b) is unfit for human consumption

Alberta Animal Protection Act

Animals in need of veterinary assistance may be transported to and from the nearest appropriate veterinary facility for treatment – the animal must be loaded humanely.

Open wounds, dog bite, predator attack



Check Points

- weeping wounds, infection
- lameness, shock

Management Options

- transport direct after complete recovery
- possible condemnation at plant
- do not transport, call vet for treatment, if treatment is declined euthanize on-farm immediately

Regulations

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Ovine Progressive Pneumonia (OPP – Meade Visa)



Check Points

- labored breathing, coughing
- weight loss
- arthritis
- mastitis

Management Options

- possible condemnation at processors
- consult veterinarian for diagnosis
- Untreatable – euthanasia imminent

Regulations

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Alberta Animal Protection Act

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Pneumonia



Check Points

- respiratory infection
- rapid breathing, fever
- weakness, hunched back

Management Options

- treat, consult veterinarian
- transport if condition is stabilized and animal is in no pain
- animal must be fit for human consumption



Regulations

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Alberta Animal Protection Act

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Polio



Check Points

- thiamine deficiency
- blindness, depression, uncoordinated,
- excess salivation
- body temp normal



Management Options

- do not transport
- consult veterinarian for treatment

Regulations



Health of Animals Act - Part 12 (CFIA)

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Alberta Animal Protection Act



Animals in need of veterinary assistance may be transported to and from the nearest appropriate veterinary facility for treatment – the animal must be loaded humanely.

Poor Body Condition



Check Points

- many causes; Johne's disease, nutritional challenge
- weakness, obvious lack of muscle and fat cover

Management Options

- do not transport for any other reason until full nutritional recovery takes place
- short-haul transport allowed for emergency care



Body Condition Score

- 1 - poor condition, very thin, emaciated
- 2 - thin
- 3 - OK
- 4 - great shape
- 5 - fat or overfat

Regulations

Health of Animals Act - Part 12 (CFIA)

No person shall load, cause to be loaded, transport or continue to transport an animal that by reason of infirmity, illness, fatigue or any other cause cannot be transported without undue suffering during the expected journey.

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Pregnancy toxemia

Check Points

- metabolic disease affecting ewes that are nutritionally challenged during gestation
- weakness, staggers, unable to rise, star-gazing

Management Options

- do not transport
- consult veterinarian



Regulations

Health of Animals Act - Part 12 (CFIA)

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Prolapse (rectal, vaginal, uterine)

Check Points

- pushed out rectum, vagina or uterus
- painful, often infected exposed tissue



Management Options

- minor rectal prolapse (retracting) can be transported direct
- do not transport serious rectal, or any vaginal or uterine prolapse
- can be transported to and from veterinary facility for treatment
- must be kept separate in a bedded compartment

Regulations

Health of Animals Act - Part 12 (CFIA)

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Alberta Animal Protection Act



Animals in need of veterinary assistance may be transported to and from the nearest appropriate veterinary facility for treatment – the animal must be loaded humanely.

Recently Tail Docked or Castrated



Check Points

- obvious recent surgical or non-surgical procedure
- not yet healed

Management Options

- do not transport until fully healed



Regulations

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Very Young

Check Points

- Nursing lambs



Management Options

- Alberta Animal Protection Act states that lambs under 8 days of age may not be transported or tendered for sale
- segregate lambs from their mothers in a separate compartment
- transport short haul, special provisions

Regulations



Health of Animals Act - Part 12 (CFIA)

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For more information please reference a copy of :

The Western Canadian Flock Health Program

The AWSC, in cooperation with other industry stakeholders, developed this voluntary flock health program as a way to reduce losses due to animal health problems. Ask your ASWC representative for a copy of the program.

Appendix 1

Regulatory Information

IT'S THE LAW

There are two levels of regulation regarding the humane and safe production of food animals in Canada:

Federal - enforced by inspectors of the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA).

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA)
South District: (403) 382-3121
North District: (780) 722-1177

Provincial - enforced by inspectors of Alberta Agriculture, Food & Rural Development (AAFRD) or Alberta Society For The Prevention Of Cruelty To Animals (ASPCA).

The Alberta SPCA
1-800-455-9003

Federal Regulations

Health of Animals Act - Part 12 (enforced by CFIA)

138.(2) Sick, Pregnant and Unfit Animals

No person shall load, cause to be loaded, transport or continue to transport an animal

(a) that by reason of infirmity, illness, fatigue or any other cause cannot be transported without undue suffering during the expected journey,

(c) if it is probable that the animal will give birth during the journey.

148.(1) Food and Water for Animals in Transit

No person shall confine in a motor vehicle

(b) cattle, sheep, goats or other ruminants for longer than 48 hours

(2) subsection (b) does not apply to ruminants that will reach their final destination in Canada where they may be fed, watered and rested without being confined longer than 52 hours.

Food and Drug Act

Part 1 (4) No person shall sell an article of food that

- a) has on it or in it any poisonous or harmful substance;
- b) is unfit for human consumption.

Reportable Disease Regulation

(for full document see CFIA website at www.cfia-acia.agr.ca)

There are some diseases occurring in sheep that must be reported by law including; anaplasmosis, anthrax, bluetongue, brucellosis, rabies, scrapie, tuberculosis.

Provincial Regulations

Alberta Animal Protection Act (enforced by ASPCA)

2(1) No person shall cause or permit an animal of which the person is the owner or the person ordinarily in charge to be or to continue to be in distress.

(2) Subsection (1) does not apply if the distress results from an

activity carried on in accordance with reasonable and generally accepted practices of animal management, husbandry or slaughter.

NOTE: *(Animals in need of veterinary assistance may be transported to and from the nearest appropriate veterinary facility for treatment but they must be loaded humanely)*

Note: Alberta's Animal Protection Act and other existing livestock related regulations are currently up for revision.

Livestock & Livestock Products Act (enforced by AAFRD & ASPCA)

Livestock Transportation Regulation (AR 22/99)

Livestock Unfit for Transport

2(1) No shipper or operator shall load or transport livestock that, by reason of infirmity, illness, injury, fatigue, or any other cause, would suffer unduly during transport.

(3) No shipper or operator shall load or transport livestock that is likely to give birth during transport unless the livestock is being transported for health reasons.

(4) No operator shall continue to transport livestock that becomes injured, ill or otherwise unfit for transport during a journey beyond the nearest suitable place at which it can receive proper care and attention.

Crowding Prohibited

3 No shipper or operator shall load or transport livestock in a vehicle in a manner that is likely to cause injury or undue suffering to the livestock due to crowding.

Duty to Keep Livestock Segregated

8 (7) Livestock of the same species but of substantially different weight or age must be segregated from one another.

Livestock Market & Livestock Assembling Station Regulation (AR 70/2000)

Unloading Livestock

7(1) No person shall unload at a livestock market or livestock assembling station any livestock that by reason of infirmity, illness, injury, fatigue or other cause is unable to stand or is unduly suffering.

Appendix 2



Recommended Code Of Practice For The Care & Handling Of Sheep

A voluntary, industry developed document published by the Canadian Agri-Food Research Council

EXCERPTS from the Code

11 Surgical Procedures

11.4 Horn Trimming - The horns of some sheep may need to be trimmed to avoid injury from ingrowing, or interference with sight or normal eating or drinking. The amount of horn removed should be kept to a minimum.

11.6 Mules Operation - Tail docking, along with timely shearing and/or crutching are more appropriate methods of controlling fly-strike.

12 Health Management & Protection of Sheep

12.1 Sheep attendants need to be able to evaluate the condition of their flock and the signs and symptoms of important sheep illnesses. They should be aware of when a sheep is distressed or ill and determine when professional help is required.

12.4 Sick or injured sheep must be attended to immediately and a decision regarding treatment, humane destruction or emergency slaughter be made in an appropriate manner.

12.6 Any occurrence of a reportable disease **must** be reported to a veterinarian employed by the federal Department of Agriculture.

14 Handling

14.3 People attending sheep should know how to properly catch them under the jaw for restraint or controlled movement. The proper use of a crook, by a competent operator, is also an acceptable catching method. **Sheep should never be caught by grabbing their fleece.**

14.7 Sheep should be lifted with proper support for the chest and abdomen.

14.8 Sheep must not be lifted by the head, ears, horns, tail or fleece.

14.9 Electrical prods are not an effective or efficient means of moving sheep and should not be used.

15 Transportation

15.1 Each person involved in the handling and transporting of sheep should be properly instructed and knowledgeable about the basic principles of animal welfare and be skilful in handling sheep under varying climatic conditions. They should be able to recognize the signs of distressed or sick sheep.

15.9.6 In hot weather, sheep should be handled particularly carefully because physical activity increases with heat stress. Every animal should be treated with extreme patience and should be allowed to rest when overexerted.

15.10.1 Sheep must be protected from frostbite and loss of body heat during transport. Young lambs and recently shorn sheep are particularly susceptible.

15.10.2 Sheep will also pile up when exposed to direct wind, possibly leading to suffocation. Openings should be covered to protect sheep from exposure to draughts. At the same time, ventilation and load should be checked regularly during transit to ensure adequate ventilation throughout the load.

15.11.6 Pregnant sheep must not be transported if they are likely to give birth during the journey.

15.11.7 The transport of unfit sheep should comply with all provincial and federal regulations applicable to the movement of unfit and non-ambulatory animals.

16 Livestock Markets

16.2.2 Market operators should refuse to accept for sale, sheep which are injured, sick or disabled. They should encourage and facilitate the humane movement of injured and disabled sheep directly to processors or, if this is not appropriate, their humane destruction.

16.2.3 Distressed sheep that are unloaded should be penned separately in appropriate penning.

16.3.15 Lambs under three days of age should not be accepted for sale, unless accompanied by their mothers.

17 Processors

17.1.3 Violations of humane handling and related regulations, such as overcrowding, careless exposure to inclement weather, or other circumstances that result in unnecessary suffering, should be reported immediately to both plant management and inspection services.

17.2.8 Obviously injured sheep or sheep unable to move should be unloaded in a way that causes them the least suffering.

17.6.1 All sheep that are obviously sick, injured or disabled should immediately be separated from healthy animals.

17.6.2 Equipment should be provided for the conveyance of crippled animals within the plant without dragging or causing undue suffering.

Appendix 3

Recommended Loading Density Standards for the Transportation of Sheep

Source: *Recommended Code Of Practice For The Care & Handling Of Farm Animals - Transportation* (published by the Canadian Agri-Food Research Council)



Figure 15 Maximum trailer capacity for sheep transported standing based on average individual animal weight. A 70 pound lamb at 32 lbs/ft² has 2.2 square feet of floor space. Reduce loading density to 85% of maximum in hot humid weather and for trips in excess of 24 hours to allow room for sheep to lie down.



Figure 16 Maximum trailer capacity for sheep transported standing based on average individual animal weight. A 35 kg lamb at 160 kg/m² has 22 m² of floor space. Reduce loading density to 85% of maximum in hot humid weather and for trips in excess of 24 hours to allow room for sheep to lie down.

Euthanasia

Euthanasia is the humane termination of the life of an animal. It must be done correctly using acceptable industry practices.

Acceptable

- **Penetrating Captive Bolt** – head must be captured in a chute or secured to a solid object using rope or halter hank.
- **Non-penetrating Captive Bolt** - same as above.
- **Gunshot** - .22 calibre
- **Barbiturate** - only a **licensed veterinarian** may administer a drug to euthanise.

Not Acceptable

- **Blunt trauma** - hammer or gate pin to the head.
- **Bleeding** - laceration of carotid arteries & jugular vein is not acceptable unless the animal has been stunned first (with captive bolt or gunshot).
- **Air embolism** - injecting air into the artery of an animal is not acceptable because a swift and painless death cannot be assured.
- **Any other method** (electrocution unless in a registered processor, injection of chemicals not designed for euthanasia) is prohibited.

Confirmation of death

A lack of heartbeat, respiration and corneal reflex for five minutes post-stunning indicates death. If in doubt, bleed the animal by lacerating the carotid arteries.

Disposal

Carcasses that have been chemically euthanised by a licensed veterinarian can accidentally poison scavengers, working dogs and pets. Take the proper precautions, follow local ordinances (deep burial, composting, etc).

Guidelines for humane killing of sheep by firearms



Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3



Figure 4



Figure 5

Figures 1 and 2: Without horns. Figures 3-5: With horns.

Sheep Without Horns

Secure the head with a halter, and offer food to the animal. The aim of the firearm should be from behind or from the top of the head at a point high up on the head and equal distance from the eyes and ears (Fig 1 & 2).

Sheep With Horns

Approach should be from the rear and the aim directed between the base of the horns toward the mouth (Fig 3). Alternatively, the firearm can be aimed from the front just above the eyes on the midline, shooting towards the spine (Fig 4).

Source: *Recommended Code Of Practice For The Care & Handling Of Farm Animals - Transportation*
(published by the Canadian Agri-Food Research Council)

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"We support and accept the standards of humane care prepared by the Alberta Sheep & Wool Commission and will use these standards in the implementation of our enforcement program."

Morris Airey, Director of Enforcement, Alberta SPCA



"The Alberta Veterinary Medical Association fully endorses the standards of humane care practices set out by the Alberta Sheep & Wool Commission in this booklet."

Duane Landals, DVM, Registrar, AVMA

Disclaimer

The primary purpose of this handbook is to assist producers, shippers, receivers and transporters to make production decisions with consideration to responsible animal care.

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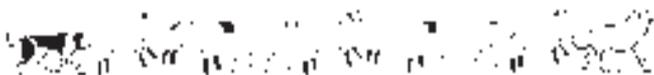
Expert professional legal and veterinary advice should be referenced by the reader on a case-by-case basis.

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