

## **Animal Welfare Regulation Reminder for Transporters**

As the 2023 calving season is underway it's important to make sure you are familiar with the young calf regulations.

Calves less than 14 days old, that are leaving the farm for sale or to go to the meat processor, must be fit for transport and meet these requirements.

Calves must:

- Be at least 4 full days old (96 hours)
- Have a dry, shriveled navel
- Have firm, worn hooves
- Be able to stand up, walk and bear weight evenly on all four limbs
- Be able to protect themselves from being trampled or injured by other calves
- Be free from injury and birth defects (e.g. blindness, contracted tendons) that would mean they cannot withstand the journey
- Be free from scours or other signs of disease that would mean they cannot withstand the journey

Calves should be well-fed with bright eyes and ears up. Wet calves showing signs of cold stress will not be fit for transport.

### **Loading Facilities and shelter**

Farmers, sale yards and meat processors must provide appropriate loading and unloading facilities for calves less than 14 days old.

Loading facilities may take any form – a ramp, a raised platform, a tractor tray. – provided they meet the criteria in the regulations. Loading facilities must allow calves to walk on and off stock transport vehicles and minimise the risk of a calf injuring itself, becoming distressed, slipping, or falling off.

Calves must have suitable shelter at all stages of the journey – before loading, during transport, and at their destination.

### **During Transport**

- The total journey time for young calves must not be more than 12 hours
- Transport of young calves by sea across the Cook Strait is prohibited
- Suitable shelter must be provided for young calves during transport

Suitable shelter means a vehicle provides shelter that:

- Is ventilated to the extent that there is no threat to the health or welfare of the calf due to insufficient ventilation
- Provides protection from adverse weather, including precipitation and extremes of heat and cold
- Enables the calf to stand up and lie down in a natural posture
- Ensures that faeces and urine do not accumulate in the vehicle to an extent that may pose a threat to the health or welfare of the calf

Over the previous few seasons MPI has been seeing an increase in calves showing signs of cold stress arriving at processing facilities being condemned on arrival. Transporters are required to ensure calves have adequate shelter during transport. Calves on the top deck are more vulnerable to the elements so plan your journey accordingly and avoid using the top deck where possible.

## **More information**

Check out a video on bobby calf welfare for transporters here

<https://www.mpi.govt.nz/animals/animal-welfare/safeguarding-our-animals-safeguarding-our-reputation/transporting-bobby-calves-and-lactating-cows/>

And access further information on our animal welfare regulations here:

[www.mpi.govt.nz/animalregs](http://www.mpi.govt.nz/animalregs)

Fitness for Transport App- Search Fit for Transport on the app store and google play. (The google play version is having issues on newer phones and this issue is being worked through).

A5 leaflets on Transport and Bobby calves - available [here](#).