

Are sows sent for slaughter fit for transport ?



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What is fitness for transport ?

ANNEX I

- **EU-law not very specific – no useful guidelines**
- **Welfare of sows during transport – only very few studies available**

1. No animal shall be transported unless it is fit for the intended journey, and all animals shall be transported in conditions guaranteed not to cause them injury or unnecessary suffering.
2. Animals that are injured or that present physiological weaknesses or pathological processes shall not be considered fit for transport and in particular if:

3. However, sick or injured animals may be considered fit for transport if they are:

- (a) slightly injured or ill and transport would not cause additional suffering; in cases of doubt, veterinary advice shall be sought;

Assessment of each individual sow



Photo: Inger Anneberg, AU

Reduced welfare
Violation of law
Reduced income

Healthy and good
condition → fit

When is she unfit?
What can be
accepted? Will it
get worse?

Must be done
pre-transport

Incorrect
assessment →
serious
consequences

Transport of sows in Denmark

- More than 400.000 animals/year
- Slaughtered in Denmark or exported for slaughter
- Small country – most national transports can be done in < 8h
- Risk diseases → animals are picked up from a truck placed near the road (max 2h, not included in the duration of transport)



New Danish research

- One large project coordinated from Aarhus University
- Financed by the government
- 2013-2016
- Broilers, dairy cows and **sows**
- National transports



Study plan

Transport for 0 – 8 timer



- Sows from private farms
- Farmers decide which animals to slaughter
- Behavioural, clinical, climatic and transport-related recordings at all stages

Aim and time schedule

- Gain knowledge about relations between the baseline condition of the sows, risk factors and the condition upon arrival at the abattoir
- Form basis for the development of a scoring system, aimed to facilitate the pre-transport assessment of fitness for transport
- 2015: Data collection





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