

# Fitness for Travel SOP

Work with your veterinarian to develop a standard operating procedure to determine an animal's ability to be transported.

Review this procedure annually with your veterinarian and the responsible employees.

**Objectives: (1)** To ensure the animal's welfare and a safe food supply by helping producers and employees determine whether or not an animal is suitable for transport. **(2)** Identify conditions that automatically disqualify an animal for transport.

**Principles:** It is not good for the welfare of the cow or the business of the farm to ship animals not fit for transport or the food supply.

**Farm:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Herd Veterinarian:** \_\_\_\_\_

- The following individual(s) will be responsible for determining an animal's fitness for transport:
  1. \_\_\_\_\_
  2. \_\_\_\_\_

## Cattle NOT Fit for Transport:

- The responsible individual(s) will evaluate the animal to verify that none of the following conditions are present:
  1. Advanced Cancer eye in either eye or complete blindness (blind in both eyes)
  2. Fever greater than 103°F
  3. Non-ambulatory/down animals
  4. Severe lameness (non-weight bearing, 3-legged lameness or obvious fracture or dislocation of leg or hip)
  5. Uterine prolapse
  6. Active calving or likely to calve during transport
  7. Distended or dropped udders that affect mobility
  8. Open wounds, active bleeding
  9. Central nervous system/neurologic symptoms
  10. Emaciated (saw toothed spine and all ribs easily seen)

If any of the above conditions are present the animal will not be transported and will either be treated appropriately or euthanized according to farm protocols.

**Veterinarian of Record Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Cattle that require Special Consideration

- Conditions that may disqualify an animal for transport and require thorough assessment include, but are not limited to:
  1. *NEWBORN CAVES – Newborn calves may not be transported until have been fed, are dry and able to stand squarely on all four feet.*
  2. Surgical wounds
  3. Skin problems
  4. Abnormal discharge
  5. Abnormal swelling
  6. Difficulty breathing
  7. Diarrhea
  8. Dangerous/fractious animals
- Animals with any of the above conditions must be evaluated thoroughly to ensure that the animal will not suffer unnecessarily, become injured, or present a threat to other animals or humans during transport.
- ✓ *Once an animal has been cleared physically for transport the medical records will be checked to ensure that no milk or meat withholds are present. If a withhold is found or suspected the animal is not to be transported.*
- ✓ **Once cleared for transport the animal will be given food and water up until the time it leaves the premises. Additionally, lactating cows will be milked within 2 hours of leaving the premises.**
- ✓ The loading areas and ramps, including the slope of the ramp, SHOULD be designed to minimize stress and injuries for the animals and ensure the safety of the animal handlers.