Module 25
Livestock: Transport and Markets

Student Activities

Questions

1. **Name a farm animal species for whom heat stress likely to be a problem, and state why this is the case?**

   (2 marks)

   Pigs and poultry, since they both have narrow thermoneutral zones.

2. **List four basic requirements of a farm animal transport vehicle necessary to ensure animal welfare.**

   (4 marks)

   Any four of the following:

   - Non-slip floor of adequate strength
   - Absorbent floor litter or other means of removing faeces
   - Sufficient space and head room
   - Adequate ventilation
   - Easy to clean and escape-proof
   - No sharp edges or protrusions
   - Suitable ramp angle

3. List the principal welfare problems for poultry during loading, unloading and transport.

(4 marks)

Any four of the following:

- Removal of birds from houses
- Staff paid for piece work
- Leg pain in broilers/turkeys
- Fractures in laying hens
- Heat stress in meat birds
- Cold stress in end-of-lay hens
- Journey times
- Access to feed and water

4. List the principal welfare problems for pigs during loading, unloading and transport.

(4 marks)

Any four of the following:

- Fear at loading/unloading
- Goad use
- Mixing stock
- Ramp angles
- Dark vehicles and lairages
- Heat stress and dehydration
- Motion sickness
- Injuries from overcrowding

5. Animals with certain clinical conditions should not be transported. List five of these conditions, using brief descriptions where necessary, and outline any specific exceptions to these rules.

(5 marks)

Any five of the following:

- Sick and injured, unless:
  - it is a minor injury, i.e. the animal can bear weight on all four legs and walk unaided on to the transporter
  - transport is required for emergency veterinary treatment
- Heavily pregnant
- Newborn (e.g. male dairy calves)
- Unweaned
- Likely to give birth during transport
- Have given birth in the last 48 hours

6. List six of the principal welfare specification requirements for all markets.

(6 marks)

Any six of the following:

- Maximum stocking densities – marked on pens
- Pen throughput ratio to prevent mixing
- Raised loading/unloading bays with non-slip ramps and floors
- Ready access to veterinary treatment and means for humane slaughter
- Safe fixtures and fittings – no sharp edges or protrusions
- Adequate ventilation
- Sufficient isolation pens
- Milking equipment
- Lighting to allow inspection
- Sufficient, trained personnel
- Vehicle cleaning and disinfection facilities
- Shelter provided for prolonged stays

In-class activity

Discussion

We suggest you spend 30 minutes on this activity.

This discussion focuses on a comparison of transport welfare and general welfare on farms

Divide the class into small groups and ask them to brainstorm the following questions:

1. How important is the welfare of animals during transport and at markets compared to their welfare during the rest of their lives spent on a farm?
2. Do you think it is easier to enforce welfare regulations for transport and markets than it is on the farm?
3. If so, why?

Key points for students to consider:

- Although the time spent in transport and at markets is short compared to the time that animals spend on a farm, transport and markets raise many potential welfare concerns that may also affect the welfare on-farm afterwards, e.g. the spread of disease.
- A useful exercise could be to recall welfare concerns on-farm for a given species (see modules 10 and 11), and compare that list with the list of concerns covered in the present module.
- Because markets are where farmers receive money for their animals, there is an extra moral responsibility to ensure that the animals are treated well.
- Farms are private, whereas markets are often more in the public domain. So it is perhaps easier to enforce legislation at markets, e.g. to ask a lorry driver to show a log of how the animals were transported.

Small-group activity

Ask each small group to devise a checklist for a welfare audit at a market, which may be used at a rest stop and which may handle all classes of cattle, sheep, pigs and horses. You may wish to divide your checklist into sections, which could include equipment, fixtures and fittings; animals; personnel training and competence and documentation.

Once the checklists are completed, encourage students to share and compare their thoughts with the other groups.

Key prompts:

Equipment, fixtures and fittings

- Stocking densities that permit all animals to lie down should be marked on pens – are pens marked?
- Raised loading/unloading bays with non-slip ramps and floors – are these available? Are floors non-slip?
- Safe fixtures and fittings – no sharp edges or protrusions – are fixtures and fittings safe and in good repair?
- Adequate ventilation – is the atmosphere in the lairage free from odours and dust and at a suitable temperature for the housed animals?
- Sufficient isolation pens – are they available, clean and in good condition?
- Milking equipment – is it available and in working order?
- Clean water continuously available (specify trough space per animal or drinker:animal ratio) – is water available and clean?
- Uncontaminated feed, suited to species (specify trough space per animal or feeder:animal ratio) – is feed available and uncontaminated, and is it suitable for animals in lairage?
- Clean bedding of adequate depth – is bedding present?
- Vehicle cleaning and disinfection facilities – is there sufficient capacity for throughput – are lorries queuing?
- Ready access to veterinary treatment and means for humane slaughter – is there equipment for humane slaughter and is it serviceable?

Animals

- Stocking densities that permit all animals to lie down, marked on pens – are animals stocked at marked density and are they able to lie down simultaneously?
- Ready access to veterinary treatment and means for humane slaughter – are all animals free from injury and disease?
- Pen:throughput ratio to prevent mixing – are there signs of aggression? Do you see animals from different pens/vehicles being mixed?
- Uncontaminated feed, suited to species – are all animals able to access feed?
- Clean water continuously available – are all stock able to access water?
- Adequate ventilation – are animals free from signs of heat and cold stress (huddling, panting, lying in dung channels)?
- Lighting to allow inspection – can animals be inspected thoroughly in normal lighting conditions, or is there sufficient supplementary lighting available?

Personnel

- Sufficient, trained personnel – do personnel know cleaning regimes/animal-handling protocols/actions in case of emergency/actions in case of injured or sick animals/vehicle disinfection regimes/hot weather contingency plans?
- Do they use them correctly? For example, are all stock being handled carefully and goads used only when necessary, on hindquarters for short times?

Documentation

- Pen:throughput ratio to prevent mixing – are there records of pen occupancy?
- Sufficient, trained personnel – are there training schedules for cleaning regimes/animal-handling protocols/action in case of emergency/action in case of injured or sick animals/vehicle disinfection regimes/hot weather contingency plans? Are these comprehensive and up-to-date? Are there records of training for all personnel? Are these up-to–date, and do essential staff members have all the necessary training for their job?
- Journey times – are there records of journey times to market for all stock?
- Ready access to veterinary treatment and means for humane slaughter – are there records of injured and diseased animals and the actions taken?

Projects

1. In your country, find out how poultry are transported. Find out if there is a system in place to protect the welfare of poultry during transport in this country. Describe this system. How effective is it? How could this system be improved or, if there is no system, how could a system be put in place? You may wish to visit a poultry transport company to assist you in this project.
2. In your country, find out what protection measures are in place, if any, to prevent the transport of injured and diseased animals, new-born animals, heavily pregnant animals or those that have recently given birth. Are the measures different for each species and if so, how are they different? How effective are these measures? How could this system be improved or, if there is no system, how could a system be put in place? You may wish to visit a government veterinary agency to assist you in this project.