

Reduce Heat Suffering During Transport



Summer is around the corner and the period of high temperatures has already commenced. At high temperatures, transport is likely to have detrimental effect on the physical integrity of the transported animals. Therefore, especially long distance transports should be avoided and short transports should be carried out at night time.

Where transport is undertaken regardless of high temperatures, the following precautions should be taken into account in order to avoid heat stress and to protect the health of the transported animals.

13 points to take into account:

1. Do not load animals when temperatures exceeding 35°C are expected at any point of the journey.
2. Handle the animals as less as possible.
3. Inspect the animals frequently for signs of heat stress (*e. g. open mouth breathing; high respiration rate; sweating; posture: neck stretched forward, body stretched e. g. for rabbits*).
4. Make sure that all animals have access to fresh water.
5. Carry movable drinkers with you in order to ensure easy access to water for all animals.
6. Reduce the loading density by at least 30%, especially in the hotter parts of the vehicle which are the front compartments (near the cabin) and the upper decks of the vehicle. Make sure that there is enough space for all animals to thermo-regulate.
7. Increase the internal height above the animals to maximize air movement and increase air exchange.
8. Carry out transports at night time avoiding the hottest hours of the day.
9. Always park in the shade, ideally with the vehicle positioned perpendicular to any prevailing wind.
10. Turn on the fan ventilation of the vehicle when it is parked.
11. Use a vehicle with a light-colored roof to reduce the effects of solar gain (*mandatory for journeys exceeding eight hours*).
12. Prepare a contingency plan for every journey; any delay, traffic jam, vehicle break down etc. may become rapidly very critical (*mandatory for journeys exceeding eight hours*).
13. Plan journeys very carefully in order to avoid any delay, especially at borders.

