



NEBRASKA
Good Life. Great Roots.
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE



Beef Cattle Handling and Transport

What resources may you need

- Stock panels, plastic paddles, panels or rails for fencing, disposable coveralls, boots, gloves
- Sled, sling or mechanized equipment for moving livestock if necessary. If using a forklift use plywood to create a platform.

Weather Conditions

- During times of inclement weather (severe heat, humidity, and cold), the window time livestock can spend on a vehicle narrows substantially. In such conditions, it becomes important to work quickly to identify locations to off-load the livestock to avoid shrink, illness, or even death.
- Is the temperature higher than 75° to 80°? Approaching or higher than this temperature, especially with humidity there is increased concern for heat stress. Making adjustments to trailer ventilation, decreasing stocking densities and stopping where there is better air flow is important. During extreme heat beef cattle should avoid being in transport between 11 AM – 4 PM.
- Is the temperature below 30°? At these temperatures, especially with increased wind speeds it is important to make provisions to keep the cattle warm and dry. During extreme cold it is recommended that beef cattle should not be hauled at night.



Condition of the Beef Cattle

- Healthy beef cattle walk easily with no apparent lameness and no change in gait.
- Stressed cattle may exhibit shortness of stride, favor a limb or limp or show extreme stiffness and lack of desire to move.
- Panting, foaming or excessive salivation are indications of heat stress.

Biosecurity Concerns

- Any equipment used to load, unload, handle or transport dairy cattle needs to be cleaned and sanitized. This includes interior and exterior surfaces.
- Disposable items also need to be properly disposed of after use. If not using disposable items wash clothing and clean and disinfect boots. Your clothing and footwear can spread disease.

Handling/Hauling Information

- Move slowly and calmly when approaching cattle. Cattle prefer to keep a safe distance between them and their handlers.
- Cattle have a blind spot directly behind them and prefer handlers remain in their sight lines.
- Sick or injured animals require special handling. If an animal is non-ambulatory or too weak to move or is likely to go down, it should not be moved.



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Swine Handling and Transport

What resources may you need

- Stock board/panels, bolt cutters, disposable coveralls, boots, hats/hairnets, dust masks, gloves.
- Stretchers, sleds, hand carts and mechanized equipment for moving pigs depending on size.

Weather Conditions

- Pigs do not have a thick coat of hair or the ability to sweat, making them particularly sensitive to heat and cold stress. There is increased death loss potential June through September and increased potential for non-ambulatory swine September through February.
- When temperatures are over 75° and depending on humidity it is important to make provisions for adequate ventilation if the tractor/trailer is stopped. Tractor/Trailers utilize passive ventilation and only have air flow when the trailer is perpendicular to prevailing winds or when the trailer is moving.
- If stopped during hot weather, slat and hole covers must be removed to allow for additional air flow and for water sprinklers in the trailer to be activated.



Condition of the Swine

- Healthy stock look fit and healthy, are in good condition, and are able to stand for extended periods of time.
- Signs of stress could be suddenly lying down, panting, trembling, squealing and a splotchy skin appearance.

Biosecurity Concerns

- Biosecurity measures for the swine industry are critically important. Many swine diseases are readily transmitted



during transport and can cause substantial loss for the industry.

- A key biosecurity term in the swine industry is “Line of Separation.” A “Line of Separation” designates the outside (contaminated) area and the inside (clean area). In the event of an accident or off-loading think in terms of drawing a line in the sand – a point at which certain parties must not cross. If someone does cross it they should not

return to the clean side.

- Any equipment used to load, unload, handle or transport pigs needs to be cleaned and sanitized. This includes interior and exterior surfaces.
- Disposable items also need to be properly disposed of after use. If not using disposable items wash clothing and clean and disinfect boots. Your clothing and footwear can spread disease.

Handling/Hauling Information

- Pigs should be handled quietly and patiently, especially in new environments and always with a stock panel or board.
- Pigs prefer to maintain a safe distance between themselves and handlers. They do not respond well when driven toward people and prefer handlers remain in their sight lines. Note: Pigs have a blind spot directly behind them.
- Moving pigs in groups of 3 to 5 is most preferred.
- If the tractor and/or trailer are damaged and unable to move, herd any loose pigs from the road and gather them in an area as far away from traffic as possible. Provide as much protection and comfort for the animals as possible.



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Dairy Cattle Handling and Transport

What resources may you need

- Stock panels, plastic paddles, Panels or rails for fencing, disposable coveralls, boots, gloves
- Sled, sling or mechanized equipment for moving livestock if necessary. If using a forklift use plywood to create a platform.

Weather Conditions

- Dairy cattle should be moved at a time of day that is appropriate. Cooler weather is appropriate to avoid excessive heat. Providing for ventilation in the event a tractor/trailer is stopped is extremely important.
- During cold and wet weather, the tractor/trailer may need additional bedding, covering of slats and additional non-slip flooring to adequately provide for the cattle.

Condition of the Dairy Cattle

- Signs of Healthy Dairy Cattle
 - Alert
 - Damp nose
 - Easy movement
 - Glossy skin
- Signs of Stressed Dairy Cattle
 - Dry nose
 - Lack of vigor
 - Lameness
 - Hunched back
 - Rattling sound when breathing
 - Isolation from other animals
 - Undigested particles in manure



Biosecurity Concerns

- Any equipment used to load, unload, handle or transport dairy cattle needs to be cleaned and sanitized. This includes interior and exterior surfaces.
- Disposable items also need to be properly disposed of after use. If not using disposable items wash clothing and clean and disinfect boots. Your clothing and footwear can spread disease.

Handling/Hauling Information

- Most dairy cattle are very calm and used to being around people. Move slowly and deliberately when approaching or moving them.
- Loud noises can scare cattle and should be avoided during handling. Dairy animals do not respond positively to yelling or loud noises.
- Do not crowd animals in alleyways or chutes when loading. Focus on minimizing the number of directional changes the animals must face.
- If temporary holding areas are constructed ensure the chute, rail or panels are high enough to keep the cattle contained.
- Sick or injured animals require special handling. If an animal is non-ambulatory or too weak to move or is likely to go down, it should not be moved.



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NEBRASKA FARM BUREAU



NEBRASKA CATTLEMEN



Poultry Handling and Transport

What resources may you need

- Tarps, stock panels, bolt cutters, disposable coveralls, boots, hats/hairnets, dust masks, gloves

Weather Conditions

- Is the temperature higher than 86° (most poultry) or 75° (Broilers)? Approaching or higher than this temperature increases concerns for heat stress. Provisions to shield the birds from direct sunlight should be made as well as providing for ventilation.
- Loading/hauling damp birds increase animal welfare concerns and possible death.

Condition of the Birds

- Signs of a Healthy Flock
 - Birds are alert, curious, active
 - Feathers are smooth and clean
 - No discharge from eyes or nostrils
 - Combs and wattles are bright red or pink (older turkeys may have some blue, red or purple coloration of the skin on the head or neck)
 - Droppings are formed, not runny and tails are not soiled with manure
- Signs of a Sick Flock
 - Many dead birds
 - Swollen, puffy heads and sinuses
 - Failure to react. Birds do not run away when approached. Acting sleepy.
 - Gasping for breath, coughing or open-mouth breathing
 - Dark red, purple or black combs
 - Crippled or lame birds, unable or difficulty walking
 - Dirty or bloody vents
 - Diarrhea

Signs of Overheating:

- Red-flushed faces, combs and wattles
- Rapid panting and open-mouth breathing

Signs of Chilling:

- Blue combs
- Feathers fluffed up and shivering

Biosecurity Concerns

- Biosecurity measures for the poultry industry are critically important. A major disease outbreak could shut down the entire poultry industry.
- Any equipment used to load, unload, handle or transport live poultry needs to be cleaned and sanitized. This includes interior and exterior surfaces.
- Disposable items also need to be properly disposed of after use. If not using disposable items wash clothing and clean and disinfect boots. Your clothing and footwear can spread disease.

Handling/Hauling Information

- In the event of an accident or roll-over, an intact load should be pulled upright as soon as it is safe to do so. Contact a commercial catching crew to assist with reloading. Sorting birds at the scene is not recommended.
- Speed: If approached too quickly, birds may become over excited. You should walk slowly when moving or approaching birds. Do not chase.

- Bright Light: Bright lights stress birds. Lights should be dimmed to calm birds if possible.
- Strangers: Birds show increased stress around unknown people, especially if they wear bright (particularly white) colored clothing. Wear darker colors if possible.

- Sounds: Birds are stressed by loud noises. No yelling or shouting. Do not bang on the walls or the floor.

