

ANIMAL WELFARE: STANDARDS, INDICATORS AND DIALOGUE ARE THE KEY FOR AN EU SUCCESSFUL ANIMAL WELFARE POLICY

The European Livestock and Meat Trades Union (UECBV) condemns illegal and bad practices. UECBV claims that the images presented do not represent the daily reality and wants to clarify as follows:

1. EU regulations on animal welfare are amongst the strictest in the world and, when correctly applied, ensure optimal transport quality and best practices at the time of slaughter.
2. Export of beef to certain countries is a false good solution as these countries give priority to the purchase of live cattle and sheep. Therefore, restrictive and economically impracticable transport conditions from Europe to these countries will only displace trade in favour of South American countries that will export to the Mediterranean and Middle East countries. The immediate consequences will be, on the one hand, economic and job loss and, on the other hand, a significant increase in journeys for the livestock. The effect will be contrary to the desired trend!
3. Every day, more than one million animals are transported across Europe. The transport conditions show a great improvement during the last ten years thanks to the enforcement of the EU legislation, the new technologies and modern equipment, a better training, the functioning of the Single Market. These are factors for a successful animal welfare policy that could be shared with the EU trade partners.
4. The way of producing in Europe is a model in terms of health guarantees, food safety and animal welfare. The actors of the livestock and meat industry are targeted with incessant denigration.
5. UECBV has always been in the front line together with the EU Commission Services and the Animal Welfare organisations to improve welfare of livestock during transport and at the time of slaughter. For instance, guidance documents aiming at sharing and transferring best practices have been drafted and disseminated.
6. UECBV supports and encourages the European Commission and OIE to perform trainings in Mediterranean and Middle East countries in order to maintain the excellent standards for the livestock until the end of their life.
7. UECBV will continue with its efforts to promote animal welfare in and outside the EU, in close cooperation with the EU Commission, Member States, international organisations, animal welfare NGOs. UECBV is always open to a positive dialogue seeking further improvements for the sake of the European livestock and European livestock sector. UECBV already suggested that objective indicators be set in order to assess the quality of transport.
8. Finally, UECBV welcomes the EU Platform on Animal Welfare. It will bring together business operators, competent authorities, NGOs in order to promote EU standards on animal welfare. The Platform will be another opportunity for further dialogue, and to share best practices, scientific knowledge and policy developments. All in all, it will be a way forward towards a better enforcement of the EU legislation, in and outside the EU territory.

ENDS

The European Livestock and Meat Trades Union (UECBV) is the EU voice of national federations representing livestock markets, livestock traders (cattle, horses, sheep, pigs), meat traders (beef, horse meat, sheep meat, pig meat), and the meat industry (slaughterhouses, cutting plants, meat preparation plants).

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