

## Farm animal transport journey times

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### This guidance is for England

When transported in connection with an economic activity (in other words, a business or trade) horses (except registered horses\*), cattle, sheep, goats and pigs must not be transported for more than eight hours unless the additional requirements for vehicles carrying out long journeys are met.

[\*Registered domestic horses are those registered with a recognised breed society or companies like the British Horse Database at Weatherbys. 'Registered domestic Equidae' does not simply mean those with horse passports.]

At the final place of destination animals must be unloaded, watered and rested for at least 48 hours. Approved assembly centres, including livestock markets, can be places of departure if the animals have travelled to the market less than 100 km (approximately 62 miles) or they have been there for at least six hours with sufficient bedding and water. If not, then the time spent travelling to the market must be added to the journey from the market to establish the journey time.

### 'Journey' definition

'Journey' means the entire operation of transport from 'place of departure' to 'place of destination', including loading at the place of departure, any transfer during the journey, any unloading, rest / accommodation and loading occurring at intermediate points in the journey, until all animals are unloaded at the place of final destination.

A 'place of departure' is the place at which the animal is first loaded on to a means of transport, provided that it has been accommodated there for at least 48 hours. European Union (EU) approved assembly centres, including livestock markets, may also be regarded as places of departure (see '**How does a livestock market affect journey times?**' below). A 'place of destination' is the place at which an animal is unloaded from a means of transport and either accommodated for at least 48 hours prior to the time of departure or slaughtered.

## What are the principal requirements?

The welfare of animals during transport is protected under EU Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 *on the protection of animals in transport and related operations*.

Anyone transporting vertebrate animals on journeys of over 65 km (approximately 40 miles) as part of an economic activity must hold a valid transporter authorisation to do so. Anyone transporting cattle, sheep, pigs, goats, domestic equidae or poultry by road over 65 km is required to hold valid certificates of competence for drivers and attendants of road vehicles. For more information about documentation requirements please see 'Transporting livestock by road: paperwork'.

All persons who take animals on a journey, whatever the length, should always apply the following good transport practice:

- the journey is properly planned and time is kept to a minimum
- the animals are checked and their needs met during the journey
- the animals are fit to travel
- the vehicle and loading and unloading facilities are designed, constructed and maintained to avoid injury and suffering
- those handling animals are trained or competent in the task and do not use violence or any methods likely to cause unnecessary fear, injury or suffering
- water, feed and rest are given to the animals as needed, and sufficient floor space and height is provided

For more information about welfare requirements please see 'The welfare of animals during transport'.

## What is the maximum permitted journey time for livestock by road?

Eight hours, except as set out below. This applies to horses, cattle, sheep, goats and pigs.

Pigs less than three weeks old, lambs less than one week old and calves less than ten days old must not be transported further than 100 km.

Transporters of vertebrate animals carrying out journeys of over eight hours by road must, in addition, have their vehicles or livestock containers inspected and approved according to specific criteria; this includes on-vehicle drinking systems, ventilation systems and temperature monitoring. If these additional provisions for long journeys are met then the journey times in the table below apply.

<b>Animal</b>	<b>Journey time</b>
unweaned calves, lambs, kids and foals that are still on a milk diet, and unweaned piglets	after a maximum of nine hours travel, a rest period of at least one hour must be given. This is sufficient time for them to be given liquid and, if necessary, fed. After this rest period, they may be transported for a maximum of a further nine hours

<b>Animal</b>	<b>Journey time</b>
cattle, sheep and goats	after 14 hours of travel a rest period of at least one hour must be given. This is sufficient time for them to be given liquid and, if necessary, fed. After this rest period they may be transported for a further 14 hours
pigs	may be transported for a maximum period of 24 hours but must have continuous access to water
horses (except registered horses)	may be transported for a maximum period of 24 hours. During the journey they must be given liquid and, if necessary, fed every eight hours

If animals have not reached their destination after these journey times, they must be unloaded, fed, watered and rested for 24 hours at an approved control post.

At the final place of destination animals must be unloaded, watered and rested for at least 48 hours or slaughtered.

Lactating cows, sheep and goats transported without offspring must not be transported for more than 12 hours without being milked.

Different provisions apply when the means of transport is by, or includes, air and/or sea.

## **Derogations for means of transport by road on journeys under 12 hours**

A single journey in the UK of up to 12 hours' continuous duration is permitted in order to reach the final place of destination without the need for the vehicle to meet the additional provisions required for longer journeys. This does **not** apply to horses, cattle, sheep, goats or pigs. For more information see the *Welfare of Animals During Transport* guidance, published by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra).

## **How does a livestock market affect journey times?**

Livestock markets approved as assembly centres by the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) can be places of departure if the animals to be transported have either:

- travelled to the market less than 100 km  
... or
- been accommodated in the market with sufficient bedding, untied if possible, and watered, for at least six hours

In these circumstances a new journey begins.

If the animals have travelled over 100 km, or have not been in the market for over six hours, then the time spent travelling to the market must be added to the journey from the market to establish the journey time.

## Further information

For more information please see the section of the GOV.UK website on welfare regulations for live transport.

## Penalties

Failure to comply with trading standards law can lead to enforcement action and to sanctions, which may include a fine and/or imprisonment. For more information please see 'Trading standards: powers, enforcement and penalties'.

## Key legislation

Animal Health Act 1981

EU Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 *on the protection of animals during transport and related operations*

Welfare of Animals (Transport) (England) Order 2006

Last reviewed / updated: January 2020

## In this update

General detail and table showing journey times added

## Please note

This information is intended for guidance; only the courts can give an authoritative interpretation of the law.

The guide's 'Key legislation' links may only show the original version of the legislation, although some amending legislation is linked to separately where it is directly related to the content of a guide. Information on amendments to legislation can be found on each link's 'More Resources' tab.

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