

Culling Checklist



Recent research completed at the University of Guelph has led to the development of a checklist to help producers evaluate fitness for transportation. Producers using this tool found that they had higher confidence when shipping out cull cows.

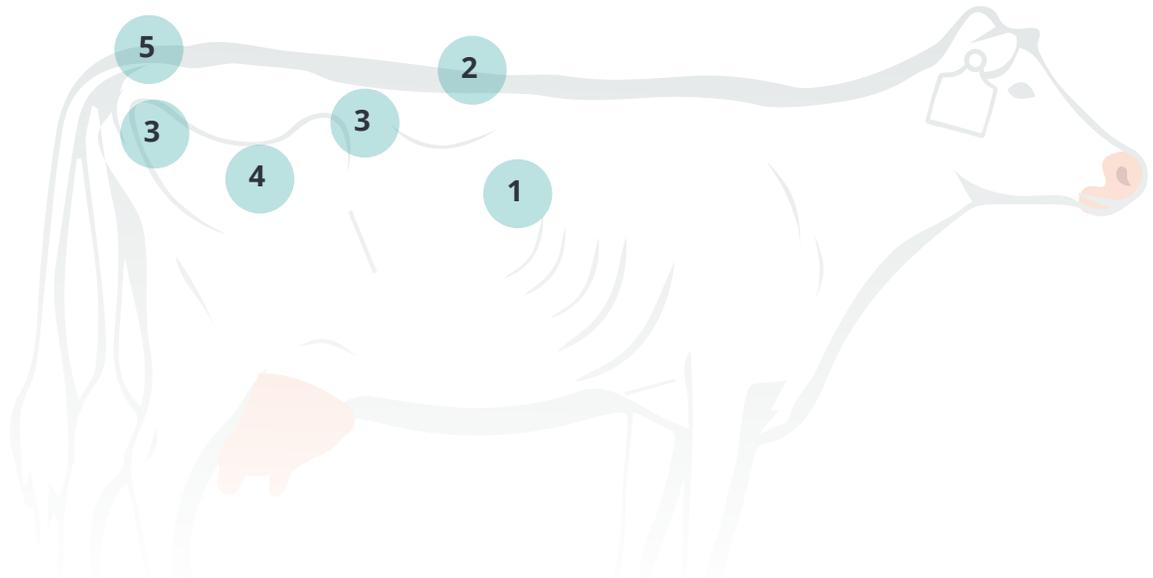
Consider these questions before shipping the cow:	Measure and record:	Federal Requirements to Transport	Circle your finding	
Is her body temperature abnormal?	Body temp: Indicate whether <input type="checkbox"/> °C or <input type="checkbox"/> °F _____	Is the body temp. below 37.9 °C (100.2 °F) or above 39.5 °C (102.5 °F)?	Yes	No
Is she too thin?	5 point body condition Score (see next page)	Is the score 2 or lower?	Yes	No
Is she lame?	5 point lameness gait Score (see next page)	Is the score 3 or higher?	Yes	No
What stage of lactation is she?	Current milk production _____	Does she require regular milking?	Yes	No
Are drug residues possible?	Last treated: (dd/mm/yy) _____	Is she still within the withhold time for meat and/or milk?	Yes	No
Is there mastitis?	Is mastitis present in any quarters: RF RH LF LH	Is moderate to severe mastitis present? (udder swelling or hardness)	Yes	No
Any other problems?	Check any problems: <input type="checkbox"/> Sunken eyes <input type="checkbox"/> Dull and depressed <input type="checkbox"/> Twisted stomach <input type="checkbox"/> Diarrhea <input type="checkbox"/> Abscesses <input type="checkbox"/> Surgery sites <input type="checkbox"/> Swelling/lumps <input type="checkbox"/> Nasal discharge <input type="checkbox"/> Discharge from vulva	Are there any visible problems that would be unacceptable for sale? (Check with your vet if unsure)	Yes	No



If you answered "Yes" for any of the categories above, DO NOT SHIP this animal OR determine if she can be shipped only with special provisions

How to Evaluate Body Condition Score?

To identify cows with low body condition score, or that are emaciated (< 2), there are several characteristics to examine:



1 Short ribs

- Ends sharp to touch
- Loin prominent, shelf-like appearance
- Obvious scalloping over top and ends

2 Backbone

- Vertebrae prominent in chine, loin, and rump area
- Individual bones easily visible

3 Hook and pin bones

- Sharply defined, very angular in appearance
- No discernable fat pad

4 Thurl

- Severe V-shaped depression without fat cover

5 Tail head

- Both sides of the tail head are sunken and hollow
- Sharply defined ligaments connecting pin bones to spine

Visit www.dairyfarmers.ca/proaction for more information on assessing body condition score.

The Bottom Line

The Canadian government and dairy industry are making changes to ensure that the transportation of cattle does not result in reduced health and welfare.

These changes help to outline the specific conditions and requirements that must be followed to ensure optimal care of these animals.

How to Evaluate Lameness?

Lameness scoring can be difficult as there may be subtle differences in classifying certain scores. Working with your veterinarian can help to identify lame cows early and improve your understanding.

To ship a cow, they need to have a gait score of 1 or 2 meaning that they are NOT lame. Table 1 below provides a description of each score for lameness:

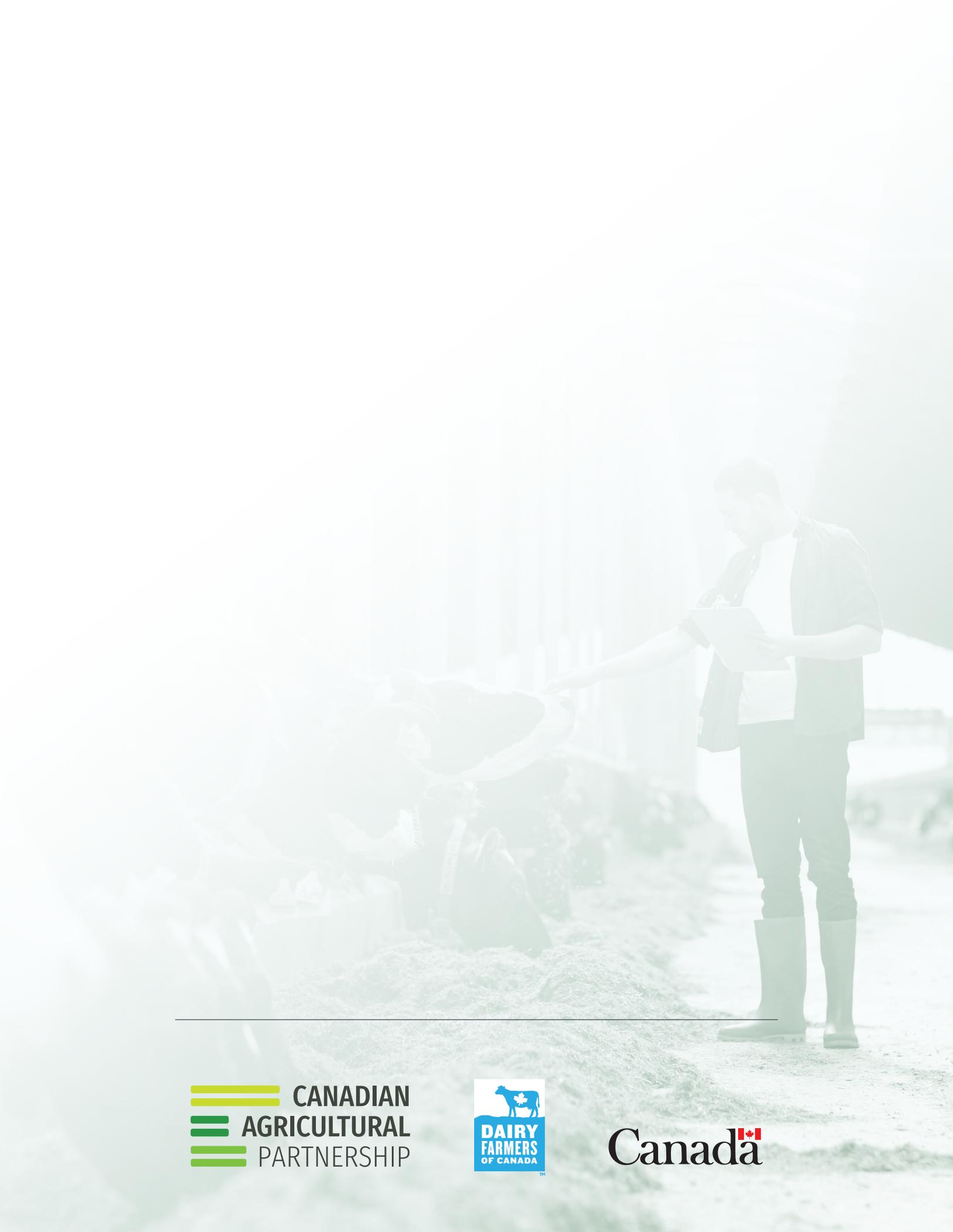
Score	Description	Behavioural Criteria
1 Sound	Smooth and fluid movement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Flat back when standing and walking ● All legs bear weight equally ● Joints flex freely ● Head carriage remains steady as the animal moves
2	Ability to move freely not deminished	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Flat or mildly arched back when standing and walking ● All legs bear weight equally ● Joints slightly stiff ● Head carriage remains steady
3	Capable of locomotion but ability to move freely is compromised	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Flat or mildly arched back when standing, but obviously arched when walking ● Slight limp can be discerned in one limb ● Joints show signs of stiffness but do not impede freedom of movement ● Head carriage remains steady
4	Ability to move freely is obviously deminished	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Obviously arched back when standing and walking ● Reluctant to bear weight on at least one limb but still uses that limb in locomotion ● Strides are hesitant and deliberate and joints are stiff ● Head bobs slightly as animal moves in accordance with the sore hoof making contact with the ground
5 Severely Lame	Ability to move is severely restricted Must be vigorously encouraged to stand and/or move	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Extreme arched back when standing and walking ● Inability to bear weight on one or more limbs ● Obvious joint stiffness characterized by lack of joint flexion with very hesitant and deliberate strides ● One or more strides obviously shortened ● Head obviously bobs as sore hoof makes contact with the ground

Source: University of British Columbia Welfare Program



Assessing lameness in tie stalls can be a bit trickier. There is an accepted in-stall lameness assessment that is used for proAction[®], which can help to identify lame cows in this housing system. However, because your animals will be walking onto a truck and walking around at the other end of their journey, we recommend gait scoring your animals. This is how they will be assessed at the other end!

Visit www.dairyfarmers.ca/proaction for more information and videos on assessing lameness.



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