

## Shipping Animals & proAction®

The Dairy Farmers of Canada's proAction® initiative requires that all dairy farmers have a written standard operating procedure (SOP) for shipping cattle. The focus of this SOP is on (1) preventing food safety risks and (2) maintaining animal welfare.

**This SOP is a mandatory element of proAction®.**



To ensure you are in compliance with proAction®, discuss with your provincial coordinator or visit the proAction website [www.dairyfarmers.ca/proaction](http://www.dairyfarmers.ca/proaction)

## SOP Requirements Impacting Food Safety

Remember, cull cows are destined to be slaughtered for human consumption, so we must ensure all culled animals are safe to eat.

**The following are required elements that must be in your proAction SOP for shipping cattle:**

- Check treatment records to ensure cattle have met the appropriate milk and meat withdrawal times prior to shipping
  - **Do not ship to slaughter if withdrawal time has not been met**
- Check treatment records to ensure animals do not have broken needles
  - **Pass information (animal ID, treatment record or log) on to next buyer**
  - **If animals are being shipped for reasons other than slaughter, pass chemical residue or broken needle information on to the transporter or next buyer**
- Ensure all cattle are identified with dairy approved, beef approved, or Agri-Traçabilité Québec tags
- Ensure individuals who work with dairy animals are aware of your SOP for shipping cattle and they follow proper withdrawal periods and administration techniques



proAction > High quality Canadian milk.  
is safe and responsibly produced.



# SOP Requirements Impacting Animal Welfare



Transporting animals requires special considerations to ensure a high standard of animal welfare. Your shipping cattle SOP must also include a number of elements that ensure animals are fit for transport.

**The following are the required elements that must be in your proAction® SOP for shipping cattle:**

- An assessment of every animal prior to loading
- Provide feed and water to dairy cattle within 5 hours of loading, if the expected duration of confinement is longer than 24 hours from the time of loading
- Provide calves with at least 4 L [for a 45 kg (100 lb) calf] of colostrum and/or milk prior to loading
- Load cattle using only experienced and trained handlers and avoid the use of an electric prod
- Segregate animals that are not compatible with each other to minimize fighting or injury



## Do NOT transport animals that are:

- Non-ambulatory/down
- In poor body condition indicating emaciation or weakness [body condition score (BCS) < 2]
- Severely lame or cannot bear weight on all four legs
- Likely to give birth during the journey
- Require hobbling to walk

## Recommended For Your SOP

Here are some additional practices we recommend including in your SOP:

- Milk out lactating cattle immediately prior to transport
- Dry off heavily lactating cattle destined for slaughter before shipping
- Check loading facilities to ensure they are compatible with the trailer used, are free of protrusions or sharp objects, and have no areas that would cause stress to cattle
- Verify there is not an unprotected gap between the vehicle and ramp
- Move cattle in small groups
- Load cattle calmly and quietly

### REMEMBER:

**Every farm must have an SOP for shipping cattle that contains enough information so that all farm personnel responsible for shipping cattle can ensure that food safety risks are prevented, and that cattle welfare is maintained.**