



Welfare in Transport (WIT) Team, Specialist Service Centre - Exports
Hadrian House, Wavell Drive, Rosehill Industrial Estate, Carlisle, CA1 2TB
Tel: 0845 603 8395 Fax: 01228 591900 Email: wit@animalhealth.gsi.gov.uk

To: All Authorised Sheep Transporters

Your Ref:

Our Ref:

Date:

Dear Transporter

Welfare of Animals during Transport – Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005.

Advice on the Transport of Newly Shorn Sheep in Cold Weather.

1. Exposure to low temperatures is a threat to animal welfare during transport and these conditions are a very real possibility during winter months. Failure to take account of cold temperatures when planning journeys may, in particular, cause unnecessary suffering to newly shorn sheep. This applies to the pre-loading period, loading and unloading as well as any other part of the journey.

2. Newly shorn sheep should only be presented for any journey, including export journeys, during the period from 1 November to 31 March:

- if they have a staple growth of at least **7.0mm** (this may be achieved either by allowing re-growth or by shearing with a suitable long comb); and
- if the sheep have not been shorn less than 24 hours before the start of the journey.

3. May I draw your attention to the fact that it is an offence under animal welfare legislation¹ to transport animals in a way that causes, or is likely to cause, injury or unnecessary suffering. Transporting newly shorn sheep in low temperatures might fall into this category and, upon inspection, Local Authority enforcement officers, or Animal Health staff, may prevent or interrupt such journeys with the possibility of further action being taken.

4. This letter is being copied to the European Commission and to the competent Authorities in other Member States who, like us, have powers to interrupt journeys and take enforcement action if the welfare of animals during transport is, or is thought likely to be, prejudiced.

5. Should you have any queries on this letter please contact the Welfare in Transport (WIT) helpline on 0845 603 8395, lines are open from 08:30 to 17:00 Monday to Friday (an answer phone is available at all other times), calls will be charged at local rate. Alternatively please email: wit@animalhealth.gsi.gov.uk

**Welfare in Transport Team
Animal Health, Carlisle**

Welfare of Animals (Transport) (England) Order 2006; Welfare of Animals (Transport) (Wales) Order 2007; Welfare of Animals (Transport) (Scotland) Regulations 2006

Head Office: Animal Health Corporate Centre, Block C, Government Buildings, Whittington Road, Worcester WR5 2LQ

t +44(0)1905 763355 f +44(0)1905 768851 e corporate.centre@animalhealth.gsi.gov.uk

Animal Health is an Executive Agency of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and also works on behalf of the Scottish Government, Welsh Assembly Government and the Food Standards Agency

www.defra.gov.uk/animalhealth