



## Hoofed Animals, Carnivores, Felines

### **Animal transport and animal reaction during transport**

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Transportation of animals is mostly done by professionals; it can be one of the most traumatic experiences in an animal's life. In order to minimize the stress and trauma to the animals during transportation we like to crate train the animals we plan to ship for a minimum of 30 days.

#### **PROCEDURE:**

- Introduce the container in the enclosure of the animal at the beginning of the pre-export quarantine. The animals become familiar with the container .
- Use positive reinforcement to familiarize the animals with the container, by feeding favorite food item or treats in the container
- Water troughs are fitted in the crates
- The first week the animals are hesitant to go near it. They gradually get closer and we begin putting part of the meal in the crate
- Once they enter the container willingly they should be confined daily for increasing lengths of time starting with a very brief period.
- Positive reinforcement is important here .
  
- Animals have to see their crate as a safe haven
- Animals get used to the voice of their keeper and talking to them can help to calm them down

Once animals are crated the door is closed, animals should not feel nervous as they were already acclimated to the crate.

They will become fearful when their crate is lifted on a truck and it is important the Attendant remains with the animals until they arrive at the airport, during this time the Animals will smell and hear things that are totally different to what they were accustomed to.

It is the attendant or the keeper job to remain with the animals at all times, and ensure that people are kept at a distance. Speaking to them helps.

#### **Proper equipment to lift crates and Airport**

- Forklifts and cranes: if lifting by crane proper hocks must be on the crate, if lifting by forklift, the size of the teeth on the forklift and maximum weight capacity are important.

Once at the airport animals will start to become a little more stressed, noises of different people, equipments and aircrafts are sounds they have never heard before, airline employees and anyone whom is around will be curious to try to look at the animals,

It is imperative that you make arrangements with airline and ground handling staff that only people whom are directly involved with the animals remain with the animals.

### **Possible stress factors**

- airline staff or other shippers wanting to see what is inside the box , people are normally noisy, loud and stressful to the animals, it is very important that one key airline employee, one ground handling crew and government officials have access to the animals during the preparation of export inspection.

### **At airport**

- When it is time to load the animals on the pallet it is advisable that the attendant inform the airline crew to keep it low key and not make too much noise with the forklifts and other equipment if possible.
- The attendant should remain close to the animals at all times if permitted.

### **Loading of animals on pallet**

- ensure that plastic is under the crate to ensure protection of the pallet.
- Species that may produce fluid should be packed in container with leakproof or resistant floors
- Plywood or other wood may be needed to secure the crate on pallet
- Ensure that the crate is secured by straps and nets.
- Ensure that the pallet is safely put on the dolly to transport to aircraft.

### **On Tarmac waiting to load aircraft**

- Verify the length of time on the tarmac before loading the animals on the aircraft If attendant is permitted to remain with the animals this is to ensure that no bystanders disturb the animals
- When it is time to go to the aircraft, the attendant may remain with the animals if allowed by airport security and arrangements have been made.
- The temperatures will be different and noises louder, the smells will be different and animals will begin to get more nervous.

### **Loading aircraft**

- Request that the animals are loaded last to be offloaded first. You avoid the stress of having the animal on board, while the aircraft is being loaded and keep the delays to a minimum
- Once inside the aircraft, the attendant should verify that the crate is firmly attached to the floor of aircraft, that the net is secured.

- Make sure there is enough space around the crate to move freely; other pallets or cargo may block access to the crate.
- At this time should attach the inside outside thermometer on the crate.
- If he is permitted he can remain with the animals, if not he will go to his seat.
- He will meet with the captain or flight crew and will inform at what temperature he wants to keep the hold for the animals at.
- It is normally advisable that animals travel at a temperature lower than they are accustomed to.
- It is also advisable that the lights are not completely turned off but dimmed.
- If you are carrying tranquilizers you must consign them to the captain unless he asks you to keep them.

### **Inside aircraft**

- If attendant is not permitted to remain with animals during takeoff, once airborne the attendant must go check on the animals as soon as possible, at this stage the animals are still nervous as they do not know what is going on, so it is important for the attendant to check on the animals and to speak with them for a little while, it is not necessary but I normally like at this point to give some food to keep them less stressed.  
Once you have been in flight for a little while, monitor the cargo hold temperature and that animals are calm if all okay you go back to your seat.
- Check on the animals every two hours so as not to disturb the animals too much. When you return to cargo hold lights will be dimmed so make sure you bring your flashlight, once you have looked in the crate and if animals are calm you quickly leave.
- You return in two hours.
- If during the course of transport, there is turbulence some animals do not react, others will become very nervous, you may have to offer tranquilizers to reduce the stress.
- Before you give tranquilizers you must inform the captain of this, he is the one that is safekeeping the tranquilizers for the animals or if he told you to keep them, he may have one of the crew be with you during the time you give the tranquilizer or allow you to do it alone.
- It is the captain's choice, so do not argue.
- It is very important that during all this time you take notes of the animal reaction, how he is behaving and if tranquilizer given the amounts and times.
- If it is a short flight, the animals are not fed; if the flight is over 12 hours at mid-point we give some food and water.
- Most animals will behave very well and the lull of the aircraft makes them calm, some animals however do not calm down and remain nervous during the whole flight.
- Before landing it is important to look in on the animals again, verify the straps and nets and pallet locks are secured, as the vibrations can sometimes unlock the pallets. You remove the thermometer at this point, and turn on the lights.

- Right after landing it is very important that you remain with the animals, this will be more traumatic on the animals than the departure, the noise and smells will be different .
- It is likely that the importing zoo has informed the press and they will want to come on board the aircraft. Normally in the US this is not permitted unless there has been prior clearance.
- This type of commotion should be avoided at all cost and discussed at length with the receiving institution.
- it is a good practice if the importing zoo has had most of his customs and government paper-work done ahead of time. This allows for quicker transport from the airport. If there is a delay it is important to have the ground crew move the animals to a quiet place and ensure that the attendant returns to stay with the animals after clearing customs and immigration
- Loading on truck and delivery to zoo will also be different for the animals. Upon arrival at their new facility it is very important that no press is present during the unloading
- Once animals are in their new enclosure it is important for the old keeper and new keeper to work jointly with the animals for at least 2-3 days. Sometimes the receiving zoo does not permit this, but it is better for the animals welfare, as he still has someone that he trusts and will calm down quicker if this person is there to make the transition

### **Important points in animals transport for animals are**

- crate training,
- Attendant remains with animals at all times
- Attendant must be aware of and prevent avoidable sources of stress.
- Attendant must have knowledge of tranquilizers and how to use them
- Attendant must understand the airline procedures
- Attendant must understand the paperwork and permits required and ensure he is in possession of these documents.
- Do not ship animals that are not fit for transport.
- Do not ship animals that are in advanced stages of pregnancy.