



Should this Rabbit Be Loaded?

SHOULD THIS RABBIT BE LOADED?

Guidelines for Transporting Rabbits

DO NOT LOAD DO NOT TRANSPORT IF

- Depressed or dull
- Difficulty breathing or significant discharge from eyes or nostrils
- Extremely thin or weak
- Dislocated, broken or exposed bones
- Unable to rise or walk due to physical abnormality or injury

CAUTION

Conditions requiring further assessment before rabbit can be loaded

ENVIRONMENTAL

- Wet rabbits in cold weather
- Very hot and humid environmental conditions
- Severe cold temperatures, particularly with a wind chill
- Prolonged road closures that will significantly delay rabbit transportation

INDIVIDUAL RABBIT

- Minor trauma, wounds or bleeding (including injury due to handling)

HERD

- Diarrhea
- Respiratory disease
- If a herd is diagnosed with a disease by a veterinarian, special provisions for loading may be required

Assessment decisions should be made by the producer, loading crew, transporter and processing plant when faced with CAUTION conditions.

LOAD & TRANSPORT HEALTHY RABBITS

HEALTH OF ANIMALS REGULATIONS, PART XII (1)

No person shall load, confine or transport an animal that is unfit, or cause one to be loaded, confined or transported, in a conveyance or container (139(1)).

DO NOT

- Transport a sick or injured rabbit
- Load or unload a rabbit in a way likely to cause injury or suffering
- Crowd rabbits to such an extent as to cause injury or undue suffering

www.inspection.gc.ca

VIOLATORS OF THE HEALTH OF ANIMALS ACT

- Fines up to \$10,000
- Increased fines for repeat offenders
- Repeat offenders posted on Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) website

GUIDELINES FOR DEALING WITH RABBITS

Rabbits must be protected from extremes in ambient temperatures during loading and transportation. Rabbits are particularly sensitive to heat stress since they have few means of cooling themselves. Similarly, wet rabbits may chill quickly in very cold temperatures and should not be loaded.

Heat stress index for rabbits

TEMP C	Relative Humidity %												
	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	100
35	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV
34	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV
33	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV
32	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV
31	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV
30	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV
29	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV
28	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV
27	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV
26	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV
25	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV
24	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV
23	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV
22	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV
21	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV	SEV

(BASED ON MARAI ET AL., 2002)

Loading densities should be decreased under conditions of high ambient temperature and/or relative humidity.

LOAD & TRANSPORT HEALTHY RABBITS

- 1. IDENTIFY**
Identify compromised rabbits during routine herd monitoring.
- 2. EUTHANIZE**
Daily removal of unfit animals improves loadout efficiency and eliminates the need to euthanize large numbers of rabbits on farm just prior to loading.
- 3. DISPOSE**
Refer to provincial legislation for deadstock regulations and methods for proper disposal.

Identification of Sick or Injured Rabbits

Wry (twisted) neck

Severe diarrhea

Exposed bone

Open wound

Bleeding

Weak

Severe respiratory disease

Disclaimer: Nothing in this poster should be deemed to constitute veterinarian advice. For such opinions, please contact a qualified licensed veterinarian. Please also be advised that the recipients of this poster shall be bound by the full Farm & Food Care Ontario Disclaimer found at www.farmfoodcare.org.

