

FOUR WEEKS

Cruel end: One of the calves filmed in Eyes On Animals' report. Below: A calf being transported by road



THE LAW ON LIVESTOCK TRANSPORT

ACCORDING to European Union regulations on the transport of livestock, calves making journeys of more than 100km must be at least ten days old.

The 2005 directive says that all animals 'shall be transported in conditions guaranteed not to cause them injury or unnecessary suffering'.

It also states that they should be transported in safe and well-ventilated trucks and calves aged less than six months must be provided with bedding and appropriate space. During the journey the animals must be shielded from bad weather, and containers must have a slip-proof floor to prevent injury.

Animals must also have sufficient space to allow them to move around during the journey.

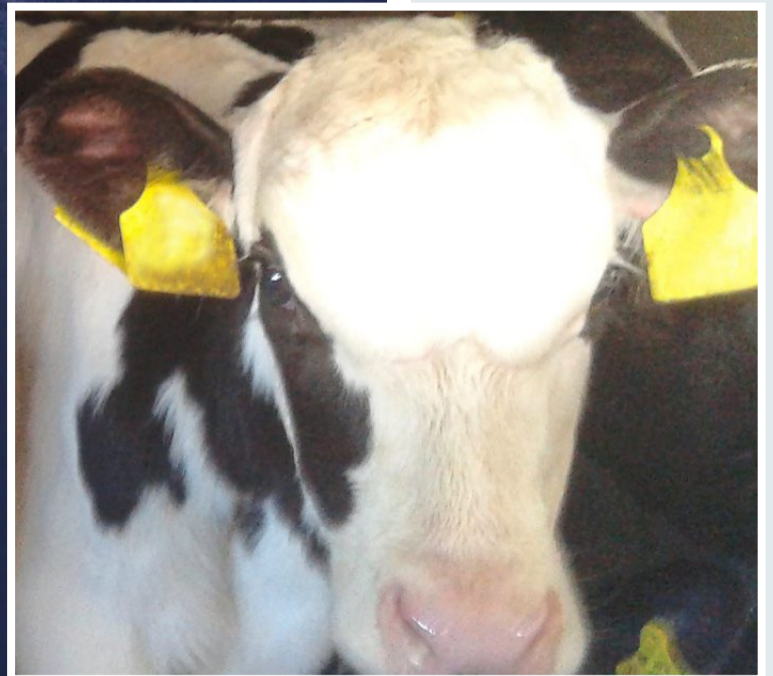
Pigs must be at least three weeks old and lambs must be one week old before they can be transported.

During transport cows must be fed at least once every 24 hours and water should be offered at least every 12 hours.

Unweaned calves must be given a rest period of an hour after travelling for nine hours and another rest period after a further nine hours, under EU law.

After travelling they should also be given a further rest time of 24 hours.

There is no Irish minimum age for when a calf can be taken from its mothers and some are removed at birth in an attempt to prevent a bond developing between mother and calf.



ung, starved and pent up

must be kept in groups. Although white veal is not widely consumed in Ireland, in Europe it is a very profitable

Discouraged from exercising

option for farmers as there is high demand for the meat in restaurants and homes.

White veal is consumed widely

in the Netherlands, France, Italy and Germany and Irish calves are sent to these locations to meet the growing demand.

Rose veal is veal with higher standards of animal welfare wherein the calves are not fed a restricted diet.

The calves are also older when slaughtered and have more space to move around and interact with other calves.

Groups of calves are kept

indoors with natural light, plenty of straw and room to move around freely.

As a result, the colour of the meat is pinker than that of the white veal.

Animal welfare organisation Compassion in World Farming - Ireland has backed the production of rose veal in Ireland as an alternative to the traditional practices that are associated with white veal.

colour for the veal market. The calves are then slaughtered in special veal abattoirs.

Most of the Netherlands veal production is for export as the majority of Dutch supermarkets have banned it as a cruel practice.

The Mail asked a Department veterinary inspector to view the footage. He said the calves were 'about three weeks old' and were

still suckling from their mothers. He said it was permitted under EU law to ship them abroad at this stage. He also confirmed that the calves on the trucks and in the footage from the veal farms in the Netherlands were making the familiar 'lowing' sound when they are seeking their mothers.

According to Bord Bia figures, there has been a major increase in

the number of calves exported from Ireland during the first five months of this year. A total of 128,673 calves were exported up to May 27 - an increase of 35% on the same period last year. The majority go to the Netherlands and Spain.

The Department of Agriculture said in a statement that violations are not normal in calf exports.

'In general, live animal exports

are uneventful, with the animals arriving in good condition at points of destination,' it said.

'On the few rare occasions where problems arise during transport, or where allegations of non-adherence to regulatory requirements during transport are brought to the Department's attention, a thorough investigation takes place into the circumstances of the

journeys undertaken.'

It added that such investigations 'are often carried out in conjunction with the French authorities when the allegations relate to non-compliance whilst on the Continent. Sanctions have been applied to those who were found to have breached regulations.'

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