



European
Commission

Unweaned animals

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EU Platform on Animal Welfare
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Members

- **Public entities:** Mayte Villalba, Ana Catalán, Tea Dronjic (Invited expert)
- **Civil Society:** Francesca Porta, Iris Baumgartner
- **Professionals:** Raoul Maas (Invited expert), Ono Hiddingo (Invited expert)
- **Scientists:** Mette Herskin (ISAE), Margit Jensen (Invited expert), Michael Marahens (Invited expert), Antonio Velarde (Independent expert)



Scope



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- ✓ Calves of two to five weeks of age.
- ✓ Transported over long distances.

The animal welfare consequences:

1. Prolonged hunger
2. Thermal comfort
3. Health/fitness for transport

- Scarce scientific information
- Studies on farm



Prolonged hunger



- When the calf has been unable to meet its physiological requirements for energy, proteins or specific nutrients. This results in a catabolic energy supply.
- A daily amount of milk below 10% of body weight might constitute prolonged hunger.
- No scientific evidence to state the maximum feeding intervals that constitute 'undue suffering'.
- Electrolyte solution does not meet nutritional requirements.

Suggestions of animal based measures:

Cross-sucking, vocalization and competition for milk, if available.



Thermoneutral zone:

- Humidity below 80% → Between 5°C and 30°C.
- Humidity above 80% → Between 5°C and 27°C.



Thermal stress:

When the animal is unable to maintain constant body temperature by behavioural and physiological adaptation.





Animal based measures

- Cold stress:
 - **Shivering**: slow and irregular vibration of any body part, or the body as a whole.
- Heat stress:
 - **Panting**: breathing in short gasps carried out with the mouth.
 - **Sweating**: visible signs of sweating on their skin (wet animals, dried sweat spots, salt deposits) are counted as sweating animals.





Risk factors

- Space allowance
- Quality and amount bedding, dry bedding
- Climate and air exchange around the animal
- Competence of the drivers





Next meeting in September

