Animals should be slaughtered near the home farm instead of being transported long distances.

Regulations are needed to:
- Ensure journeys do not exceed eight hours
- Ensure proper training for drivers
- Ensure that trucks have water on-board when journeys exceed eight hours
- Ensure mechanical ventilation and heating systems are adequate
- Ensure adequate space for animals to lie down on long journeys
- Prohibit electric prods during loading and unloading, and ensure animals are not beaten
- Ensure tacho-graphs are on trucks to record travel times, speeds and distances
- Provide dedicated lanes for animal transport vehicles at borders
- Ensure increased enforcement of transport regulations, and allow weigh station personnel, police and SPCA officers to enforce transport regulations, in addition to CFIA inspectors

What you can do
The Canadian Coalition for Farm Animals is working to end the suffering of farmed animals during transport.

You can help make a difference:
Write your MP and ask for stronger transport regulations for farmed animals.

If you see an animal transport problem, such as rough handling, inadequate weather protection or overcrowding, contact the police or the nearest CFIA office. (To find the local number, call CFIA at 1.800.442.2342 or 613.225.2342 or search www.inspection.gc.ca.)

It is important to record the vehicle's licence number, transport company name, description of the driver, date, time and location.

One cruel ride
Canadian regulations governing the transportation of farm animals are outdated and in desperate need of change.

For example:
- It is legal to transport pigs, horses and chickens 36 hours without water, food or a rest stop.
- Cows, sheep and goats may legally be without water, food or rest for 52 hours of transport within Canada. That's more than two days and nights.
- It is legal for transported cattle to go 81 hours without food before slaughter; five hours before loading (as required), 52 hours in transport plus up to 24 additional hours upon arrival at the slaughter plant.
- Newly hatched chicks may be transported 72 hours before a stop is required.

The Canadian Coalition for Farm Animals opposes long-distance transport and believes it is time for a change. To find out how you can help, read on.

Long-distance transport
Long-distance transportation (longer than eight hours) is common and poses significant risk to animals from water and food deprivation, exhaustion, jostling, piling, over-heating or exposure to cold. Importing and exporting animals for food is a global business. Animals are transported by motor vehicle, sea vessel, railway or aircraft. For example, Canadian cattle are transported to Mexico by truck and Canadian pigs are transported by ship to Hawaii.

Downers
Dairy cows make up the majority of downers due to the tremendous strain placed on their bodies by commercial milk production. “Downer” is an industry term to describe an animal too sick or injured to walk or stand. Common injuries are broken hips and leg bones, heart failure, severe arthritis, severe respiratory distress and heat exhaustion.

Improved on-farm conditions in the dairy industry and early removal of compromised animals would eliminate many bovine downers.

Downer animals are dragged, pushed with bobcats, dragged with tractors or dragged by their ears. Although regulations passed in 2005 prohibit transport of downer animals, they are still being transported due to weak enforcement. More inspectors, enforcement and training of transport workers are needed to ensure no animal unfit for travel is transported. In addition, some Canadian animals are sent to the U.S. where downer laws do not apply.

Loading and unloading
Rough treatment of animals during loading and unloading often involves excessive electric prodding. Most downer pigs result from rough, aggressive handling from the farm to the slaughter plant.

“Spent hens” — birds slaughtered following a year of egg production — often arrive at the slaughter plant injured, dead or dying with broken bones, legs and wings. In the winter they suffer from frostbite, sometimes severe enough to cause the loss of toes.

Animal transport regulations permit beating animals during loading and unloading, stipulating, “No person shall beat an animal being loaded or unloaded in a way to cause injury or undue suffering.” Regulations prohibit transport of any animal that is ill, injured, pregnant or fatigued, but only if such transportation does not cause “undue” suffering — a vague term open to interpretation.

Overcrowding
Overcrowding results in trampled animals and downers, and lack of sufficient space prevents animals from lying down during long journeys. Overcrowding also causes decreased air flow and leads to high ammonia levels and poor air quality. Chickens, turkeys, pigs and sheep are particularly susceptible to problems from poor air quality, and often die en route.

Inadequate enforcement
There are too few inspectors and infrequent spot-check inspections of animal-transport vehicles on Canada’s highways. Animal transport violations include surpassed travel times, inadequate bedding and weather protection for animals and poor driving which causes animals to lose their balance. Weak enforcement of transport regulations means animals that are diseased, injured or in pain are transported in violation of the law.

Delays
Delays occur at airports and border crossings as animals wait inside transport vehicles to be inspected by a veterinarian and customs officials. Live animals need, but do not have, priority in truck line-ups at borders.

Inadequate driver education
Drivers are not required to have training or specialized knowledge about the species they are transporting. They are also not trained in animal handling and often simply resort to overusing their electric prods.