



July 29, 2015

The Honourable Gerry Ritz
Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food
House of Commons
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c.c. Dr. Bruce Archibald, President
Canadian Food Inspection Agency,
National Headquarters
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The Honourable Jeff Leal
Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs
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Dear Minister Ritz,

With temperatures of over 30 degrees in large parts of Ontario, hundreds of trucks transport millions of farm animals despite the extreme weather conditions.

YouTube videos show pigs in heat distress in a transport truck outside a Toronto slaughterhouse in 2015, 2013 and 2011:

<https://www.facebook.com/TorontoPigSave/videos/1030808720271197/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1VRZ08sblVw>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UMfEjCQoU6c#t=187>

The most recent footage, taken at Fearman's Pork Inc. slaughterhouse in Burlington at Appleby Line and Harvester Road again shows the pigs in heat distress.

Wait times play a role in heat stress in farm animals particularly at international border crossings and slaughterhouses.

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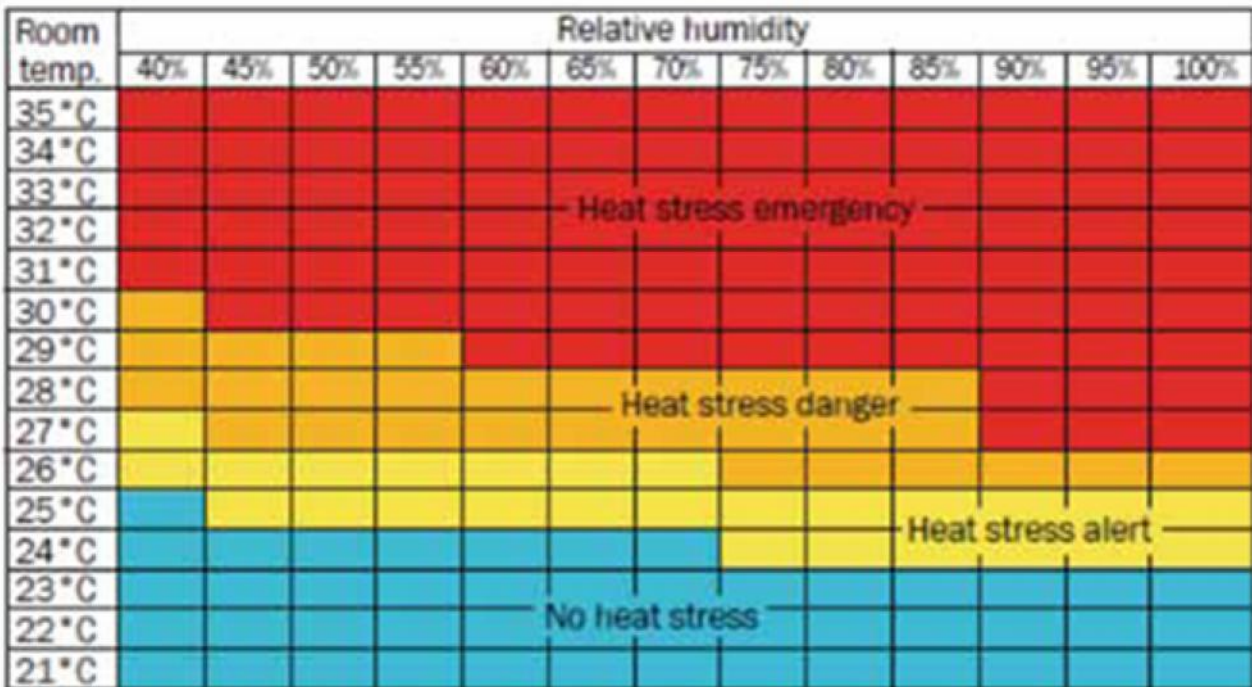
Website:
www.animalalliance.ca
www.environmentvoters.org

We would like to draw your attention to a 2007 article entitled, "Clinical Signs of Stress in Finisher Pigs Transported to Market in the Summer" by Janet Sunstrum, BSc; Cate Dewey, DVM, PhD; Charles Haley, DVM, PhD (NC State Swine Extension. Swine News Volume 30, number 8.) In part, the article states:

"The outside temperature when the pigs arrived at the packers averaged 25°C and ranged from 19 to 31°C. As the temperature on arrival at the packers increased by 10°C increments, the risk of panting, dying or being a fatigued subject pig increased 2.3, 26.7 and 26.2 times respectively (P < 0.0001). Previous research on pig transport trailers in Ontario during the summer showed that when stopped, trailer temperature increased on average by 5.6°C. It took 56 minutes for the truck to reach its maximum temperature after the stop. The increase in temperature of the trailer while it was stopped ranged from 0°C to 25°C.¹ Thus, as time waiting to unload at the packers increased, the temperature within the truck would have increased. This rise in temperature may be responsible for the correlation between time waiting in the yard and the risk of death or being a fatigued subject pig."

<http://www.thepigsite.com/articles/2046/clinical-signs-of-stress-in-finisher-pigs-transported-to-market-in-the-summer/>

In the August 2013 *Pork News and Views*, Jaydee Smith, Swine Specialist, writes "transport during any season is also an area the can cause heat stress in pigs and may result in death loss." Smith recommends that transport take place in the early morning or evening to avoid what is seen in the chart as a "heat stress emergency".



As is demonstrated by the picture below, animals are being transported to slaughter despite high humidity and temperatures over 30C. These pictures were taken on July 27, 2015 at

Fearman's Pork Inc. slaughterhouse in Burlington at Appleby Line and Harvester Road. Observers were present from 7 am to 8 pm. They show the pigs panting and in heat distress.



Through Access to Information legislation, Toronto Pig Save acquired the DOAs of pigs arriving at Quality Packers during the July 2013 heat wave. The maximum temperature reached 35C. There were a total of 83 DOA pigs arriving at the plant over 9 days from July 8-18, 2013 with over 80% of the deaths occurring in a three day period. On July 16, 33 pigs died in total including 18 on one truck and 8 on another.

Animal advocacy organizations like the Canadian Coalition for Farm Animals, Animal Alliance/Environment Voters, Born Free and citizen groups like Toronto Pig Save are Canadian groups who highlight animal suffering and inconsistent application of transport regulations under the *Health of Animals Act*.

These groups urge you to act to protect all farm animals during extreme heat conditions.

The Transportation Code of Practice recommends that “whenever possible, journeys during hot, humid periods should be avoided...”

<http://www.nfacc.ca/codes-of-practice/transport/code#section5>

And Section 445.1 (1) (a) of the Criminal Code of Canada states that, “Every one commits an offence who willfully causes or, being the owner willfully permits to be caused unnecessary pain, suffering or injury to an animal or a bird;”

Therefore we recommend that you take the following action:

1. Increase the CFIA inspection capacity to monitor the conditions of farm animals being transported in this extreme heat (temperatures reaching 30 degrees C and higher), particularly at slaughterhouses and international bridges with long wait times;
2. Distribute an extreme weather announcement to all federal and provincial commodity groups, including dairy and beef cattle, pigs and chickens and other animals, slaughterhouses and animal handlers prohibiting transport during extreme heat (and cold) weather conditions;
3. Distribute a notice via print, electronic and online media, to inform persons who frequent the farm animal transport routes with a number to a dedicated CFIA enforcement line, should they see animals in distress in transport vehicles; and
4. Ensure effective regulatory action using Administrative Monetary Penalties for all violation of transport regulations during temperatures of 30C and above.

Sincerely,



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Barry MacKay, Born Free, 905-472-9731



Stephanie Brown, Canadian Coalition for Farm Animals, 416-920-4984

Signed by Anita Krajnc

Anita Krajnc, Toronto Pig Save, 416-825-6080