



## Healthy animals – Biosecurity and the beef industry



Photograph provided by Canada Beef Inc.

## Movement of high risk and highly susceptible animals

There are two categories of animals that put the health status of the herd at risk: high risk and highly susceptible animals.

### High risk animals

High risk animals are of an unknown or relatively high risk of spreading disease. High risk animals may have been:

- raised under a different health management plan that did not address the same disease risks in the rest of the herd or a different owner's operation
- exposed to diseases not managed for in the rest of the herd or under a new owner's health management plan
- raised in an unknown health management program

If an animal meets any of the following criteria, they can be considered high risk:

- new to the operation
- sick or recently recovered
- are of a different species
- health history is unknown

### Highly susceptible animals

Highly susceptible animals are more likely to develop an illness because their immune system isn't strong enough to withstand infection. Highly susceptible animals can include:

- calves and young stock
- the sick or recently recovered
- animals that are lacking immunity or resistance
- animals that are stressed (e.g. following transport)

### Managing and minimizing risk

Producers can manage and minimize the risks surrounding the movements of high risk and highly susceptible animals by applying appropriate biosecurity practices.

### Minimize movement

The movement of both high risk and highly susceptible animals should be managed and controlled. Minimizing the exposure of high risk animals to the herd will help protect against the introduction of disease. The risk of highly susceptible animals contracting disease will be reduced if exposure to other animals, especially those considered high risk, is reduced.

### Use clean trucks

When practical, request a clean truck when arranging for the transport of animals. Disease pathogens can be found in the organic material on and in trailers. Unfortunately, clean trucks are not always available due to demand and when sub zero temperatures and access to clean-out stations reduce the ability to clean and disinfect them.

Producers should clean their livestock trailer thoroughly using hot water and detergent followed by a disinfection step before and after lending it to others or when borrowing a trailer from others, before hauling highly susceptible animals, and after transporting high risk animals.

Monitor animals for signs of illness following transport. The young, stressed, recently weaned or recently recovered are more likely to become ill when exposed to disease pathogens.

### For more information

These are just a few of the recognized biosecurity practices that producers can use to manage the disease risks on their operation. For more information on biosecurity, or to obtain a copy of the Canadian Beef Cattle On-Farm Biosecurity Standard, please visit: [www.inspection.gc.ca/biosecurity](http://www.inspection.gc.ca/biosecurity).