

Land fact

Strategies for livestock unfit to load (LF-AW-1)

Advice from Northern Tablelands Local Land Services



Livestock must be in good health before they are considered for transport. Check your MLA 'Fit to Load' guide for information to help you determine if they are fit to travel.

If in doubt - leave them out! Decide early what your course of action will be.



Before transporting livestock from property to saleyards, processors or another property, you need to check they are fit to load. Injuries and illnesses will likely get worse, not better, with stock placed under the stresses of transport and in new environments. Alternatively, leaving sick or injured stock untreated or unmanaged is also not acceptable.

When you determine an animal is not fit to load consider the strategies below and make an informed decision **EARLY!** Remember – saleyards are not the place to take stock that might be difficult to handle or have any health or welfare concerns. Consider your safety and the safety of those who will be handling the animals after they have left your property.

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Treatment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess the condition of the animal and, if necessary, consult your veterinarian. Animals that are likely to have a good recovery and can be effectively treated should be, so that they can be loaded on a later date. Look at options before you treat. Consider likely development of diseases, withhold periods (WHP) and export slaughter intervals (ESI) on any veterinary medications, as well as the possible deterioration of the animal's condition, whilst waiting for time frames to expire.
Monitor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sometimes animals just need time to recover from minor illnesses and injuries without undue handling or interference. If it is safe, humane and available, the space and time should be provided for the animal to rest and recover before rescheduling the transport. Worsening of the condition or possible spread of disease to other animals need to be considered when monitoring and appropriate follow up treatment should be administered.
Euthanase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Animals with a life threatening injury or illness in an advanced state, are likely to be considered for euthanasia. The level of pain and stress to the animal must be considered and can be gauged on changes in behaviour, response to handling and other clinical signs. If treatment is lengthy, costly, or recovery is not likely, then euthanasia is warranted. It needs to be performed by a person competent in the task, without undue delay. Depending on the circumstances, there is a possibility that diagnostic information could be obtained from the euthanased animal during a post mortem examination, that might benefit the health and treatment of other livestock.
Salvage Slaughter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This could be an option if treatment is lengthy and/or costly or recovery is unlikely. Always confirm the acceptance of the animal/s by the processor and transporter. Transport must be approved by a veterinarian If in doubt, please seek further advice prior to consignment.



Further information can be found at:

<https://publications.mla.com.au/login/redirectFrame>
<http://www.animalwelfarestandards.net.au/>

Your Local Land Services Biosecurity Officers and District Veterinarians can assist you with 'Unfit to Load' management strategies.

We're here to help!

Contact and more information:

Northern Tablelands Local Land Services

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www.droughthub.nsw.gov.au