

**Animal Protection Groups are shocked that
the Manitoba Government is considering the
transport of "unfit" farm animals to slaughter**

**Bill 2 should be renamed
The Animal *Uncaring* Amendment Act**

March 16, 2009: With a stroke of the pen, the Government of Manitoba will undermine the protection afforded to farm animals in the Animal Care Amendment Act, by allowing the transport of those who are unfit.

"The Act defines unfit animals as those who suffer from infirmity, illness, injury, fatigue or who are unable to stand or would suffer unduly during transport, said Twyla Francois, Head of Inspection for Canadians for the Ethical Treatment of Farm Animals (CETFA). "Apparently, the Manitoba government intends to permit the suffering so the industry can wring the last dollar out of these poor animals by getting them to slaughter before they die."

"I cannot believe that the Manitoba government would legalize such cruelty," Francois continues. "We are shocked that the Minister of Agriculture would consider amending the act in a way that will subject these animals to prolonged suffering, including those animals that have gone down from the trauma of rough loading with electric prods, heat stress and sheer exhaustion. The vast majority of Manitoba's downer animals are cull sows and boars. The "nearest" slaughterhouses for these animals are 10 to 15 hours away in the mid-west United States. I find it incredibly ironic that this inhumane amendment will be contained within the *Animal Care Act*."

"Does the Minister not care that the transport of 'downer' animals is cruel and inhumane in the extreme?" asks Liz White, Director of the Animal Alliance of Canada (AAC) and a member of the Canadian Coalition for Farm Animals (CCFA).

"The Canadian Food Inspection Agency prohibits the transport of unfit farm animals. How can the Minister of Agriculture subvert national humane transport laws by allowing the transport of badly injured or desperately ill animals? By doing so, she will allow cows, pigs and other farm animals with such debilitating and painful conditions as severe peritonitis, severe acute nephritis, mid thoracic vertebral purulent wounds, toxic mastitis, foot rot, ruptured bladders, hip splits, fractured back and hips and multiple necrotic abscesses, to be dragged onto transport vehicles and driven to the nearest slaughterhouse."

Recent investigations by Animals' Angels Canada and Canadians for the Ethical Treatment of Food Animals have shown with cull sows and boars in Manitoba that these animals are extremely health compromised. They have lived their lives

in intensive confinement in barren, metal crates only slightly larger than themselves. Over 80% of these animals suffer crippling arthritis, open ulcers on pressure points such as hips and shoulders and have difficulty breathing as their lungs have been damaged by the ammonia from the liquid waste below their slatted floors. Over 70% of cull sows have pneumonia at the point at which they are shipped for slaughter. None of these animals should be transported to slaughter.

The Animal Alliance of Canada, the Animal Alliance Environment Voters Party of Canada, the Canadian Farm Animal Coalition and Canadians for the Ethical Treatment of Farm Animals call upon the Minister to amend Bill 2 by removing the transport to slaughter provision for compromised animals. "The cruelty perpetrated upon animals already ill and injured cannot be justified and cannot be supported by anyone who considers themselves humane," concluded Francois.

Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives' Standing Committee on Agriculture and Food has scheduled its public hearing on the Animal Care Amendment Act tomorrow (Tuesday, March 17) at 7:00 pm in Room 255 Legislative Building. Local citizens and animal protection organizations from across Canada are registered to present their concerns.

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