

Country report on animal welfare during long distance transport by land and sea

Republic of Lebanon

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Multi-regional Whole Journey Scenario workshop on long-distance transport by land and sea between Europe, the Middle East, and North Africa

7 - 9 November 2023, Tunis, Tunisia



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Introduction

The Republic of Lebanon is a country in Western Asia. It is located between Syria to the north and east and Palestine to the south. Lebanon is home to roughly six million people and covers an area of 10,452 square kilometers.



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Overview of country livestock transport and trade

- Lebanon mainly imported livestock for slaughtering and breeding from Europe (EU Countries, Ukraine and Moldova) and South America (Brazil, Colombia and Uruguay) by sea.
- Number of imported animals and trends:

Number of imported animals to Lebanon			
	Breeding cattle	Slaughtering cattle	Sheep & Goat
2022	1670	100000	67000
2023	2071	112206	33755

- Pathway from ship to truck



The pathway from the ship to the Trucks.



Competent Authority

The Animal Resources Directorate at the Ministry of Agriculture is a veterinary service and Competent Authority implementing standards on animal welfare due to law number 47 dated 2017.

- Controlling import and export of animal-origin products and live animals.
- Management of health certificates and maintaining veterinary health protocols and agreements between Lebanon and exporting countries.
- Controlling border inspection posts including vehicle checks, animal health status, and upholding animal welfare standards.
- Inspection including control on loading and discharging of live animals.

National animal welfare standards

- National legislation (Animal Welfare Law) number 47 dated 2017 was edited and established in cooperation with animal welfare organizations local and international and of course according to WOAH standards and recommendations.
- More than 15 decrees and decisions should be issued according to the Lebanese animal welfare law number 47 covering all aspects of animal welfare issues including transportation, transport of animals, standards for facilities, containers, and vehicles for the transport of animals.

Implementation of the standards

- In general, from 2017 and before the veterinary services started to implement animal welfare standards within daily duty. From the date of this law, many things were changed and improved.
- Veterinary has protocols updated to comply with animal welfare standards.
- Loading and discharging of live animals at the port of Beirut were improved, and veterinary inspections were enhanced by veterinarians at the border inspection post (VIP).
- Veterinary health certificate (VHC) and permissions are verified.
- Loading and Discharging start only after the inspections and are checked by the veterinarians at the Border Inspection post.
- Usually the inspection happens in 3 phases: **prior inspections/documentary checks** (certificates according to protocols signed between Lebanon and exporting countries)
Physical checks (animal health status, vessel conditions, transportation condition of the animals if they are according to the animal welfare national and international law.
Sampling Blood samples are randomly drawn and sent to laboratories for animal disease testing purposes.
- In case of non-compliance, the veterinary inspectors give a remark to the shipment owner, and a written complaint and report are sent to the central administration for follow-up. And the central administration can issue a recommendation to stop the vessel and stop the merchant from exporting if the behaviour doesn't change.

Monitoring and evaluation

- 1- Shipments of livestock should be delivered directly to Lebanon from the country of origin.
- 2- Documentary Check, original health certificate, and certificate of origin with tag numbers
- 3- Log book inspected
- 4- Blood Samples are collected and sent immediately to the official lab in a closed stamped envelope.

(Specific blood tests are performed depending on the exporting country, for example (South America: blue tongue, brucella, and FMD) (Europe: blue tongue and brucella)

As Lebanon trying to comply with animal welfare and not affect animals, all livestock case inspection takes time, the animals can be discharged at quarantine centers of importers based on written formal consent and legal documents from the ship owner that no action of any sort (selling, slaughtering, etc) will be taken until the results are issued and shipment is cleared by the veterinary inspectors

Cross-border transport of animals

- Lebanon was planning on a big project of drafting new legislation with international standards and requirements for transport trucks for livestock but is currently suspended as it is costly and the Lebanese government is seeking investors it should be done in a Public-Private partnership.
- Complying with the WOAHA Live Animal Regulations for land and sea, animal shipments, the provisions of CITES for shipments of CITES-listed species, and any additional requirements of the importing and exporting country.
 - Using the most appropriate methods of transportation, loading, and discharging for the welfare and safety of animals. The details of the implementation of Article 5 in Law 47 shall be specified by an Order of the Ministry of Agriculture.
 - Providing the veterinary procedures in accordance with the WOAHA regulations at the time of import.
 - Transporting without delay the animals that comply with the requirements of import from/to the establishments or transport facilities designed for accommodation or transportation.
 - Veterinarians are constantly on hand at the port to receive any animal shipment. There will be no days off for the sake of animal welfare and safety.
 - If there is a concern with the documentation (not original or incomplete), the Minister will be informed, and animals will be released to quarantine upon approval.
 - The shipment livestock owner must submit a formal consent confirming that the livestock will be quarantined until the original copies and missing papers are received by express mail.
 - If there is a problem with the shipment in general (tests, documentation, stops), a report will be made to the nation of origin, and the shipment will not be received or enter the country.

Conclusions:

Since the issuing of the Animal Welfare Law, Lebanon is complying progressively with WOAHA AW guidelines, especially in issues related to:

- 1- “Killing for disease control purpose”, (Glanders, GF TADs – FMD & PPR)
 - 2- Stray dog population control (Rabies Strategic plan)
 - 3- Animal welfare during long distance transport of animals by sea and by Air. Nevertheless, the implementation is sometime hindered by illegal interventions, lack of budget, lack of awareness of the private sector, training of the veterinary inspectors, etc.
 - 4- The financial crisis since October 2019, the COVID - 19 pandemic and the Blast of Beirut Harbor, impacted deeply the normal life in all sectors in the country.
- Hopefully, 2024 and the years to come will show the rise again of the country of the Cedars

Thank you

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