

VIDEO TRANSCRIPT

Live Animal Export Explained

Live Export



SUMMARY

This 5-minute educational video introduces students to the global live animal export trade.

Live export refers to the commercial exportation of living animals between countries for various purposes, including slaughter or breeding. Many of these journeys cover extremely long distances, which can span weeks at sea or many hours in the air flying between countries or continents. In particular, sea travel is often an arduous, uncomfortable and stressful experience for the animals on board and one in which casualties and loss of life is inevitable.

Explore the welfare issues associated with the live animal export industry while considering the different views on the topic. Voiceless encourages critical thinking, discussion and healthy debate.

This video is part of a suite of resources for high school teachers looking to bring animal protection issues into the classroom. It contains no graphic footage. To explore the full 'Live Export' Animal Protection Education (APE) kit, head to our website: www.voiceless.org.au/schools/live-export/.

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Live animal export is a topic of ethical debate all around the world.

With the trade spanning over 130 countries, why is it under so much scrutiny?

Let's explore some of the key welfare issues, which make live export so controversial.

Many factors can impact on an animal's health and wellbeing during transportation on trucks, aeroplanes, and ships.

And animals can suffer both physically and emotionally in a number of ways.

Overcrowding, **heat stress**, poor sanitation, and inadequate nutrition are just a few of the welfare issues faced by animals on board live export ships.

With ships carrying up to 70,000 animals on board, it is little wonder why overcrowding is such a problem.

Although there are rules about **stocking densities** on ships, animals are packed tightly in order to increase profits.

This lack of space reduces the **behavioural freedom** of animals.

Most commonly, limiting the freedom to lie down.

Heat stress is another common welfare issue, occurring when an animal's body temperature rises above normal.

When this happens, animals struggle to distribute excess heat effectively around their body, and may become physically stressed as a result.

Sometimes, this can be fatal.

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Animals can be forced to stand in their own bodily waste for weeks, creating risks of slipping and getting bogged.

This waste can also create high levels of **ammonia gas** which can cause irritation to an animal's eyes, nose and respiratory tract.

Failure to eat on board is also a significant issue. Some sheep refuse to eat the food provided, as they struggle to adjust to the switch from a grass-fed diet to pelleted feed provided on the ships.

In some instances, this can lead to death by starvation.

The welfare risks continue when animals arrive at their destinations.

Animals have to adjust to different climates and may also experience rough handling and long waiting periods before and after disembarking.

Animals may also be subject to a range of slaughter methods including some which cause pain and suffering.

It can be very difficult to monitor and detect these sorts of animal welfare breaches, as they occur in overseas countries across many different locations.

In light of these welfare risks, it is unsurprising that the public have raised concerns about the trade, leading to the creation of campaigns around the world to ban live export.

Some people argue that the trade is necessary for farmers, jobs, and the economy.

And that animal welfare needs are being met by improvements to regulation.

Whilst others argue that the trade is inherently cruel and incapable of adequate regulation by governments.

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They note the history of significant animal welfare breaches in the industry, and point to the availability of alternatives to the live export trade.

They argue that animals are sentient feeling beings, and should be treated with compassion and respect.

So, what do *you* think?

Is the live export trade ethical and should it be allowed to continue?

Consider the different views on this issue and decide for yourself where you stand.

Discuss with your friends, family, classmates and teachers. Debating complex issues is healthy and helpful.

Words in **bold font** are defined on the [Voiceless Animal Protection Encyclopedia](#) on the Voiceless website.
