

## Transport of Dutch breeding cattle to Russia: Observations from 16.02. to 19.02.2007

Team 1: Nicole Urbantat, Julia Havenstein

Team 2: Iris Baumgärtner, Brigitte Gabeli

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*Date and time in this report according to Central European Time (CET).*

### Friday, 16<sup>th</sup> of February 2007

On highway A2 near Wrzesnia, direction Liesct.

8:15 CET: **4 trucks** of the German company **Spedition Hefter** are heading in to direction Warsaw. We start trailing them covertly.



16<sup>th</sup> Feb., 8:15 CET: Hefter trucks heading direction Warschau



Inscription on tailgate: Artgerechte Tiertransporte

### Description of the 4 trucks:

- Red cab, DAFF, with inscription "Spedition Hefter", Silver-blue one-compartment trailer, inscription "Siegfried Röck", lic.pl.no: **SU-H-1511** (trailer), **SU- EH 318** (cab), loaded with heifers on 2 levels, Eartag no.: NL 4223 0590, -6302, -3684, -5031
- Red cab, DAFF, with inscription "Spedition Hefter", yellow one-compartment trailer, inscription on the tailboard "Artgerechte Tiertransporte", "Spedition Hefter, Troisdorf", photo of a calfs' head, lic.pl.no.: **SU-H-1671** (trailer), SU EH 620 (cab), loaded with heifers on 2 levels
- Red cab, DAFF, with inscription "Spedition Hefter", yellow one-compartment trailer, inscription on the tailboard "Artgerechte Tiertransporte", "Spedition Hefter, Troisdorf", photo of a calfs' head, lic.pl.no.: **SU-H-1538** (trailer), loaded with heifers on 2 levels
- Red cab, DAFF, with inscription "Spedition Hefter", yellow one-compartment trailer, inscription on the tailboard "Artgerechte Tiertransporte", "Spedition Hefter, Troisdorf", photo of a calfs' head, lic.pl.no.: **SU-H-1023** (trailer), loaded with heifers on 2 levels

8:32 CET: The trucks pass the gas station on A2 near Konin.

All 4 trucks drive on the **A2** until the end, at roundabout turn into **direction Lodz** and on the **72, direction Rawa Maz.**

11:00 CET: All 4 trucks stop at a gas station.

11:30 CET: 2 trucks with the lic.pl.no. **SU-H-1538** and **SU-H-1023** leave the gas station and continue on the **72**. At 12:30 they turn on the **A8, direction Warsaw**, then on the road no. **50**, to GROJEC. In a traffic jam we loose the 2 trucks and find them again at 15:00 CET at a parking lot on the A2, from where they continue to the border of **Terespol/ Kukuryki**.

At 16:00 CET the truck with the lic.pl.no: **SU-EN-2 (front)** is stopped by police in Rogoziniec, but continues appr. 15 min later.

At 16:50 CET the 2 trucks **SU-H-1538** and **SU-H-1023** stop again approx. 2 km away from the border Terminal Samochodowy Koroszcyn, some minutes later they continue to the Terminal.



17.24 CET/ -2°C: The trucks with licence plates **SU – H 1671** and **SU –H 1511** arrive at the border at Kukuryki (PL-BY).

We cross the PL/BY border and wait for the trucks at the **first gas station** after the border of Kukuryki.

### Saturday, 17<sup>th</sup> February 2007

22.45 CET: 2 German trucks, loaded with cattle on 2 levels, stop to get fuel at the gas station behind the border of Kukuryki.

- **OS-HD 493**, blue one compartment trailer, red Scania cab, inscription Dieckmann
- **MU- W 5558**, silver one compartment trailer, white cab

0:40 CET/ - 6°C: the 4 Hefter trucks with the lic.pl.no **SU – H 1671**, **SU –H 1511**, **SU-H-1538** and **SU-H-1023** pass the first gas station behind the border on the M1. We follow.

2:00 CET: All 4 trucks of the company Hefter, with the lic.pl.no. **SU-H-1511**; **SU-H-1671**; **SU-H-1538**; **SU-H-1023** stop at the next gas station (second after the border), the drivers refuel their tanks and park the trucks. The drivers get something to eat and then back to their cabs to catch some sleep.



Eartag no: NL...5014



Eartag no: NL 3709 8934

Incomplete ear tags: SU-H 1023: **NL 5897...**; **NL 3826....**  
SU H 1671: **NL XXXX 5014**

More ear tags of heifers in the Hefter trucks: **NL 4259 5015**, **NL 3709 8934** and  
**Nr.7.(handwritten) 2059 8569**

Between **4:00 and 5:00 CET**, 3 transports of the Dutch company **Dijkstra** arrive also at the gas station to find parking for some hours. They are also loaded with cattle on 2 levels.

**7:07 CET: - 10° C**

#### **Description of the trucks:**

Green-Silver one compartment truck, inscription "Dijkstra" on the tailboard.  
lic.pl.no. **BN-TN-79/ OG-60 FR** (trailer);  
lic.pl.no. **OJ-12-LV** (trailer)  
lic.pl.no. **WL-14-YV** (trailer)

Animals are not fed or given water at any time during that stop.



Trucks loaded with cattle (Hefter and Dijkstra) at gas station in BY, Dijkstra truck leaving gas station at 8:08 CET

Some cattle were prevalently bellowing during this stop.

8:08 CET : The 3 trucks of the company Dijkstra leave the gas station and drive on to the M1, direction Minsk.

**8:18 CET:** The 3 trucks of the company Dijkstra (lic.pl.no. **BN-TN-79/ OG-60 FR**; lic.pl.no. **OJ-12-LV** , lic.pl.no. **WL-14-YV** ) pass the first toll station on M1 heading in to direction Minsk. The animals were not given food or water at any time during that stop.



**9:06 CET:** The 4 trucks of the company Hefter continue on the M1 into direction Minsk.

After a **7 hour rest of the drivers**, the 4 Hefter trucks with lic.pl.no **SU-H-1511; SU-H-1671; SU-H-1538; SU-H-1023** continue their journey into direction Minsk. The animals were not given food or water at any time during that stop.



**9:16 CET:** The 4 trucks have to stop at a Maud station (at ФЕДЗЬКАВІЧЫ).

**11:00 CET:** The 4 trucks stop again at a parking lot for 1 hour. The animals were not given food or water at any time during this stop.

The 4 trucks continue at appr. 12:00 CET on the M1.

**15:00 CET, -9°C:** All 4 trucks leave the M1, to stop at a parking lot, appr. 95 km after Minsk, at the exit to КУРГАНАЎКА and БАРЫСАЎ.

The animals in all 4 trucks are fed with hay, we do not observe that the animals receive water, but we could not observe them at this stop all around the clock.



Hefter trucks parked for 20 hour break at a parking lot: cattle are not unloaded



11:05: last Hefter truck is leaving the parking lot

### Sunday, 18<sup>th</sup> of February 2007

4:00 CET, -15°C: All 4 trucks are still parked, the drivers asleep. It is -15°C during that night.

8:45 CET: 2 trucks with the lic.pl.no: **SU-H-1538** and **SU-H-1023** leave the parking lot and continue on the M1 into direction Moscow.

9:00 CET, -12°C: We are informed that 5 more trucks of the company Hefter, loaded with cattle, were observed near Minsk.

11:05 CET: 2 trucks with the lic.pl.no. **SU-H-1511** and **SU-H-1671** leave the parking lot on the M1, direction Moscow.

From here, the distance to Moscow is 583 km according to signs along the road.

12:00 CET: the trucks with the lic.pl.no. **SU-H-1511** and **SU-H-1671** stop again at a parking lot. The parking lot does not have any possibility to get water.



Again a stop for 1 hour and 40 min at a parking lot



12:45 CET/ - 6°C: the 2 other trucks with the lic.pl.no: **SU-H-1538** and **SU-H-1023** cross the border to Russia at the M1.



SU-H-1538 und SU-H-1023 crossing Russian border and parking near Smolensk

13:40 CET: The trucks with the lic.pl.no. **SU-H-1511** and **SU-H-1671** leave the parking and continue on the M1, direction Moscow.

14:30 CET: The trucks with lic.pl.no **SU-H-1538** and **SU-H-1023** stop at the TIR parking lot at the Motel "Phoenix", near Smolensk.

14:54 CET: Both trucks leave the parking lot and continue direction Moscow.



SU-H-1511 and SU-H-1671 arrive at the Russian border

14:49 CET: The trucks with lic.pl.no. **SU-H-1511** and **SU-H-1671** arrive at the border to Russia.

At the Russian border we observe 3 trucks loaded with cattle, also from the Spedition HEFTER, with the lic.pl.no: **SU-HE-199** (cab); **SU-H-1549** (trailer), **SU-H-1013** (trailer) and **SU-H-1548** (trailer).

16:41 CET/ - 8°C: trucks with licence plates **SU – H 1671** and **SU- H 1511** pass the **Russian border** and continue into direction Moscow.

21.00 CET: The trucks **SU – H1671** and **SU H 1511** stop at a gas station on M1.

22.20 CET: The trucks continue direction Moscow.

### Monday, 19th of February 2007

Through Moscow we only managed to trail the trucks with the lic.pl.no **SU-H-1671** and **SU-H-1511**.

3:16 CET/ - 3°C: The trucks with the lic.pl.no. **SU-H-1511** and **SU-H-1671** arrive at the customs area in ZHUKOVSKIY/ Moscow.

The other 2 Hefter trucks with lic.pl.no. **SU-H-1538** and **SU-H-1023** must have arrived shortly before.

The trucks with the lic.pl.no: **SU-H-1671** enters the customs area right away. The other one with **SU-H-1511** has to wait 10 minutes until it is allowed to enter. We manage to have a look at the animals. One heifer, in the first compartment behind the cab of **SU-H-1511**, is very tall and between her back and the ceiling is not more than a space of 3 cm. Unfortunately we can not get her eartag, because she is facing the side of the truck, where the ventilation bares are closed.

#### **Fotos of heifers transported in SU-H-1511:**



Heifers back almost touching the ceiling



Heifer with eartag no: 0047



Heifer with eartag no.: 503(4)



Heifer with eartag no: 6453

We talk to the driver of the truck with the lic.pl.no: SU-H-1511. We ask him, where they have stopped during the journey to unload and rest the animals. He claims they have unloaded the cattle for 24 hours in Brest/ Belarus and that he has a stamp to give evidence for that. (!!!)

Since we are not allowed to enter the customs area, we do not know, if the animals received water here.

For some reasons, we can not continue trailing the trucks to their final destination and have to stop our observations at that point.

I called Matthias Hefter, the head of the German Spedition Hefter and asked him about his intentions to finally unload and rest his cattle. His answer is, that I should "try to organize the unloading, if I manage to find an adequate stable in Russia!?"

### **Tuesday, 20<sup>th</sup> of February 2007**

We inform the **Controllunion Netherlands** (0031 102823390) about our observations regarding the trucks with the lic.pl.no.: SU-H-1511, SU-H-1671; SU-H-1538; SU-H-1023. I spoke to Christina Figueras (email: [cfigueras@controllunion.com](mailto:cfigueras@controllunion.com))

At that time we are of the opinion, that the final destination of the animals is Belgorod, since one of the drivers told us during the stop at the customs area.

Later we receive the following information:

The trucks of the company Hefter, with the lic.pl.no. SU-H-1511, SU-H-1671, SU-H-1023, SU-H-1538 **loaded on the 15<sup>th</sup> of February at 16:30 CET in Hijlaard/NL, destination Kazan.**

The trucks of the company Dijkstra, with lic.pl.no. BR-T-6F3/ WR-22JR, OH-99-ZL **loaded in Leuwaarden, destination is also Kazan.**

### **Staging point Gargarin**

On the way back we had a look at the authorised staging point in Gargarin. In the list of authorised staging points it has a capacity of 270-310 cattle.

We are allowed to have a look into the stable. It consists out of 4 pens, with thick straw bedding and water available. Each pen has approx. the capacity for 30-35 cattle. As a matter of fact, **this staging point has only a capacity of 140 cattle.**

From the M1, km173 (coming from Moscow) turn right, drive to Gargarin, turn left appr. 300 m after the sign "Gargarin" , the stable is a big all-aluminium hall.

Person responsible at Gargarin: Olga Babkinav +79066507862 (she speaks German) When we call, she asks us, if we want a stamp.

## **Conclusions**

We started trailing the 4 Hefter trucks on the highway A2, near Wrzesnia/ PL on Friday, 16<sup>th</sup> of Feb., 8:08 CET. At that time the pregnant heifers were already transported since 15 ½ hours. We followed them covertly through Poland and Belarus and arrived on Monday, the 19<sup>th</sup> of Feb. at 3:00 CET at the customs area in Moscow- **after 82 ½ hours!** Here they had to wait several hours until they were further transported to their final destination in Kazan, which is approx. another 700 km east of Moscow.

During the journey the animals were not unloaded for the required rest period of 24 hours. We only observed the drivers giving hay once. We could not observe any attempt to give them water.

The outside temperatures in Belarus and Russia during the journey were between **-6°C and -9°C in the daytime** and between **-10°C to -15°C during the night**.

According to what we were told and to what we have observed, there is not one control post/staging point in Belarus, but there are obviously ways to get a stamp. We heard, one can buy stamps for 50,- Euros at the belar. border.

According to our information the control post in Poloski/PL is the last possibility to unload and rest animals. We only found one existing place to unload cattle between Poloski and Moskau, in Gargarin, but with a capacity for appr. 130 cattle only.

**COMMISSION REGULATION (EC) No 639/2003 of 9 April 2003 lays down detailed rules for the granting of export refunds related to the welfare of live bovine animals during transport.**

It constitutes, that the payment of export refunds for live bovine animals falling within CN code 0102, pursuant to Article 33(9), second subparagraph, of Regulation (EC) No 1254/1999, **shall be subject to compliance, during the transport of the animals to the first place of unloading in the third country of final destination, with the provisions of Directive 91/628/EEC and accordingly COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) No 1/2005 of 22 December 2004.**

### **1. RESPONSIBILITY OF THE OFFICIAL VETERINARIANS**

The member states shall ensure that a transporter does not transport any animal in a way which is likely to cause injury or undue suffering to that animal.

#### **1.1. Responsibility of the official veterinarians at the place of departure in the Netherlands**

It must be questioned, if transports during that time of the year should be authorized to countries like Russia, since the welfare of the animals is put at a high risk.

**At that time of the year temperatures in Belarus and Russia are usually far below zero and an inside temperature of +5°C, even 0°C according to Annex, Chapter VI, paragraph 3., point 3.1. of COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) No 1/2005 of 22 December 2004, can not be maintained during the journey. At these temperatures also the water system of the trucks is not working.**

**According to The EFSA Journal (2004), 122, 1-25, Standards for the microclimate inside animal road transport vehicles**, “for a 400 kg beef cattle (fed barley, gaining 0.75 kg/day) kept in dry, draught free conditions the LCT is at -9 C. LTC (Lower critical temperature) as defined below: LCT is the point in effective ambient temperature below which an animal must increase its rate of metabolic heat production to maintain homeothermy. Processes related to conservation of heat, including vasoconstriction in the periphery and behavioural adjustments to reduce heat loss from body surfaces, are at their maximum at this temperature and below (Ewing *et al.*, 1999).

## **1.2. RESPONSIBILITY OF THE OFFICIAL VETERINARIAN AT THE EU EXIT POINT AT KUKURYKI**

The 4 Hefter trucks crossed the EU exit point at Kukuryki/ Brest. All 4 trucks arrived on Friday the 16<sup>th</sup> of Feb., between 16:50 and 17:30 CET at the polish border. 8 hours later at 0:40 CET they arrived on the Belarus side.

It became apparent at the border inspection post, that the maximum allowed journey time of 29 hours was or would have been exceeded during the border check. We are questioning why the polish veterinarians did not require the immediate unloading of the animals. Especially since there is an authorised control post approximately 15 km away from the border, in Poloski/PL.

In Article 21, paragraph 1. of Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 it is written that, without prejudice to the checks provided for in Article 2 of Regulation (EC) No 639/2003, where animals are presented at exit points or border inspection posts, official veterinarians of the Member States shall check that the animals are transported in compliance with this Regulation.

## **2. RESPONSIBILITY OF THE TRANSPORTER**

The transport conditions were not in compliance with the relevant legislation of Regulation (EC) No 639/2003 and Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 and the welfare of the animals during transport was ignored by the transporter.

The transporter caused undue suffering to the animals because he

- did not water and feed the cattle every 14 hours,
- carried out the transport of the animals with delay,
- exceeded the permitted maximum journey time twice.

This represents a violation of Chapter I, Article 3 of Council Regulation COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) No 1/2005, which constitutes that., **no person shall transport animals or cause animals to be transported in a way likely to cause injury or undue suffering to them.** In addition, the following conditions shall be complied with:

- (a) all necessary arrangements have been made in advance to minimise the length of the journey and meet animals' needs during the journey;
- (f) the transport is carried out without delay to the place of destination and the welfare conditions of the animals are regularly checked and appropriately maintained;
- (g) sufficient floor area and height is provided for the animals, appropriate to their size and the intended journey;
- (h) water, feed and rest are offered to the animals at suitable intervals and are appropriate

### **2.1. Exceeded maximum journey time**

The transporter did not unload the cattle at all during the journey. The maximum journey time of 29 hours was exceeded the first time, while crossing the border between Poland and Belarus. Even though an authorized control post was available in Poloski, close to the border. Furthermore the transporter did not unload the animals at the next available authorized staging point in Gargarin, for the required rest period of at least 24 hours.

**This is in violation of the Annex, Chapter V, paragraph 1.5 of Council Regulation 1/2005, which requires after a journey time of 29 hours, that the animals must be unloaded, fed and watered and be rested for at least 24 hours.**

## **2.2 WATERING AND FEEDING INTERVALS NOT RESPECTED**

The water system did not work due to the low temperatures and the animals were not given water at intervals of 14 hours. We observed the drivers giving hay only once.

During transport the animals have more difficulties to cope with extreme temperatures and especially if they are fed below the maintenance levels they may have cold stress.

**The transporter ignored the watering and feeding intervals, journey times and resting periods laid down in the Annex, Chapter V, paragraph 1.4., literature (d) of Council Regulation 1/2005.**

## **2.3. REQUIREMENTS FOR TEMPERATURE IGNORED**

With measured temperatures of – 15 °C (Sunday, 18<sup>th</sup> of February) during the night, we assume that the allowed minimum temperature of 0°C could not be maintained within the means of transport. Especially since temperatures went below -20 °C on 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> of February, when the trucks were on its way to their final destination.

**This constitutes a violation of the Annex, Chapter VI Additional provisions for long journeys, paragraph 3., point 3.1. of COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) No 1/2005 of 22 December 2004 on the protection of animals during transport and related operations and amending Directives 64/432/EEC and 93/119/EC and Regulation (EC) No 1255/97.**

## **3. RESPONSIBILITY OF THE ORGANIZER**

We assume the Spedition Hefter was also the organizer of the transports from The Netherlands to Russia.

**In Chapter II, Article 5, paragraph 3 it states that Organizers shall ensure for each journey, that according to literature (a) of Council Regulation 1/2005, the welfare of the animals is not compromised by insufficient coordination of the different parts of the journey; and the weather conditions are taken into account.**

## **4. MISCELLANEOUS**

### **Staging points in Belarus and Russia**

The EU list of authorized staging points offers various possibilities to unload and rest animals in Belarus and Russia. Apparently there are only a few stables actually available or existing. As far as we know from third parties and according to our own observation, transporters can get a stamp, pretending they unloaded at a staging point in Brest/ Belarus. It is also possible to get a stamp of the staging point in Ramensky/Russia, without unloading the animals there. Some transporters pretend to unload at a stable in Smolensk, but this is only a truck parking lot, with water available.

We believe that between the EU staging point in Poloski/ Poland (close to the border of Kukuryki) and Moskau, there is only one staging point, in Gargarin, with the opportunity to unload, feed, water and rest animals. But as mentioned before, with a very limited capacity of 130 cattle.

**The existence and availability of all these staging points on the EU list, have to be checked and approved by EU inspectors.**

Iris Baumgärtner