



## Livestock Hauling BQA Style



*Presentation prepared by*  
Kory Stalsberg, UW-Extension Grant & Lafayette Counties  
Bill Halfman, UW-Extension Monroe County  
Sandy Stuttgen, UW-Extension Taylor County  
Cheryl A. Skjolaas, Agricultural Safety Specialist,  
UW Center for Agricultural Safety and Health

University of Wisconsin-Extension

1

When it comes to  
hauling livestock:

**Remember the 3T's:**

Truck, Trailer, and  
Transport Considerations

### FIRST, CONSIDER THE TRUCK

Can the truck handle the load you plan to transport? Getting the load moving is not where the problems usually occur; rather, can the truck stop the load? **The truck's capability depends upon its frame and suspension, body configuration, engine, transmission, rear axle gear ratio and weight.** Truck model numbers usually provide a general idea of load capacity. For example, 150, 250, 350 or 1500, 2500 or 3500 correspond to different duty rating and towing ability based on size and strength of frame, suspension, powertrain and brakes. Two-wheel drive trucks have a lighter base vehicle weight than 4-wheel drive trucks. Lighter base vehicle weight leads to higher maximum payload and towing capacity, but may limit ability to tow in less than ideal conditions. Larger or extended cabs have heavier base body weight which reduces additional payload and towing capacity.

The engine and transmission provide power to pull and hold back the load. Engines with maximum torque at lower RPM are easier to tow with than those that develop maximum torque at higher RPM. Tow—mode computers also adjust ignition curve and injection pumps for the task at hand. Newer technology automatic transmissions are better able to handle demands of towing and hauling. More speeds (gears) allow for improved optimization of engine efficiency and additional oil and transmission coolers are available on heavy duty trucks.

Lower gear ratios, for example 3.21:1, equals higher fuel efficiency and lower towing capacity. Higher gear ratios, for example 4.40:1, result in less fuel efficiency, but higher towing capacity.

#### **The truck's weight is described by several different terms:**

- Curb Weight –weight of truck with all fluids filled and no additional payload
- Gross Vehicle Weight Rating (GVWR) - weight of vehicle plus payload, includes tongue or gooseneck trailer weight applied to the truck
- Gross Combined Weight Rating (GCWR) - maximum weight of loaded vehicle and loaded trailer
- Maximum Trailer Weight Rating - maximum weight a loaded trailer the truck is safely rated to pull

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## How to determine the age of tires?

This tire was made the 35<sup>th</sup> week of 2011.



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18

## Penny Test for Tread Depth

- Put penny in grooves with Abe in head first.
- If you can see top of his head and hair, less than 2/32" - replace tires
- Check multiple places across tread



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20

## CONSIDER TIRES, TOOLS, WHEEL-BEARINGS & BRAKES

Use LT (Light Truck) or ST (Special Trailer) tires.

Replace worn or old tires.

The tire's manufacturing date is printed on the sidewall. Inspect all tires (including spares) for dry rot, cracks in sidewalls and measure tread depth. Proper inflation is vital; use a tire gauge to accurately measure inflation.

Spare tires for both the truck and trailer and a heavy duty jack capable of lifting a loaded trailer must all be accessible when the trailer is loaded.

Carry a small air compressor, 'air in a can',

flash light, jumper cables, tow rope, lug wrench, wheel block and a first aid kit (band aid for your injured finger you will get as you change the tire). Auto supply stores sell pre-assembled safety kits.

Periodically inspect the truck and trailer's wheel bearings and the condition of truck and trailer brakes. At a minimum, follow manufacturer's service and maintenance schedule. Bear in mind, heavy use and rough conditions may require more frequent maintenance.

## TRAILER CONSIDERATIONS

### Loading Bumper Trailers

- Usually want 60% of weight in front of axle
- Approximately 10-15% of total weight on the hitch
- Bigger animals up front
- Not enough weight on the tongue or towards the front can result in sway or fishtailing when going down the road. Can result in loss of control.

### Gooseneck Trailers

- 20 to 25% of load should be on the hitch
- Example - 24 ft. trailer, two axles, each rated at 8,000 lbs. and gross weight of trailer is 20,000 lbs., then the maximum load distribution would be:
- ◇ 16,000 lbs. on the trailer axles
  - ◇ 4,000 lbs. on the truck axle via the gooseneck

## BE PREPARED

Make sure your cell phone is charged and carry emergency and other contact phone numbers with you.

## Inspect Wiring and Lights

- make sure all lights and turn signals are working
- repair, replace and cover wires as needed



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Source: eTrailer.com  
Accessed: July 11, 2016

23

## Inspect the Hitch

- Properly sized ball for the hitch, correct fit, greased
- Locks down correctly
- If using a hitch pin, make sure it has a safety pin
- Safety chains



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27

## Before Heading Out

- Make sure all animals are standing.
- On long hauls, check animals after 2 hours on the road, and every 4 hours after that.



## SECURE THE DOORS

Do NOT put padlocks on livestock trailer doors! You need to easily and efficiently open the doors during an emergency situation.

Use safety chains on the trailer's doors, every door must be secured by two methods. You do not want cattle stepping out into the highway during transport!!

## Plan and Know the Route

- Drive minimal traffic area
- Know road weight limits and abide by seasonal or special postings
- Check for detours or road work - WisDOT website
- Weather conditions
- Drive at a constant rate of speed
- Phone and phone numbers



60

## Insurance

- Visit with **Your** Agent to make sure **Your** Policy covers what you are doing.
- Policies vary between and within companies
  - Trailer insurance
  - Property & Liability insurance
  - Commercial hauler's insurance
  - Hauling for friends....will you be covered?
  - Carry proof of insurance with vehicle



62

## INSPECT THE TRAILER

The floor must be free of rusty or other weak spots where cattle can step through. The useful life of wooden floor is less than 10 years; even less if not cleaned regularly. Non-slip flooring is crucial and can be created by laying a cattle panel flat on the floor or installing rubber mats. Newer trailers have excellent traction, enough that excited animals can 'dig into' and really push against, rasping their hooves in the process. Add bedding to create some cushion and practice quiet, calm animal loading and unloading. Gate unfamiliar animals separately so do not fight with each other.

Clean manure off the floor as it decreases traction, increases biosecurity risk and increases weight. Keep in mind, 2-3" of manure across the entire floor equals the weight of 1-2 calves. Fresh manure weighs 62.4 lb. per cubic ft., 2 inches of manure in a 20 ft x 7 ft. trailer area is 23.3 cubic feet or 1,456 lbs. against the total weight you can haul.

Inspect cut gates & latches. Replace rusty gates as weak gates can injure cattle. All gates must fully open and closed and freely swing. Inspect latches so they work properly. Self-locking latches are preferable as they are safer for the human handler. Make sure latch gates open (to the side wall); and the gate is not left freely swinging when cattle are present as a swinging gate leads to injury.

Side walls must be free of rusty spots, rough edges or holes. Fix every defect that cattle could get a foot, nose or other body part through.

## HOT WEATHER

- Increase space per head during hot weather conditions.
- Avoid hauling cattle when heat index is in the extreme range, (orange area on previous chart)
- Avoid hauling between 11 am and 4 pm, early morning is coolest time
- Keep stops as short as possible, and during cool part of day
- park in shade if possible
- Load less cattle

## COLD WEATHER

- Avoid hauling in extreme cold
- Avoid moving in the coldest part of the day
- Keep wind chill factor in mind
- If they must be moved in cold windy conditions, do so as quick and efficient as possible - do not stop
- Worst situation for hauling animals is cold wet conditions

## TRANSPORTATION CONSIDERATIONS

Sort cattle to be transported into groups. Use cut gates to position the different groups into different compartments with heavier cattle to the front and special needs cattle to the rear.

Special needs cattle must be able to rise and walk under their own power. They must be able to survive entire transport and marketing process and have no drug withdrawals. Decision tree posters for marketing special needs cattle are available.

Animals must be able to easily get up if they fall down. If

hauling a small load put towards the front, and confined to compartments judiciously.

Cow/calf pairs: separate cows from calves in the trailer to ensure the safety of calves.

Bulls: separate bulls from each other; separate bulls from cows or calves.

Monitor weather reports to first determine when it is safe to transport. **Heat Index and Wind Chill Index charts are available.**

## LOADING AND UN-LOADING

Make the step into and out of trailer as minimal and as easy for animals. Use a low trailer. Mound dirt or firm bedding material under the step, so cattle can walk on and off without having to jump. Another technique to lower the entry/exit height is to back the rear trailer wheels into a depression, or ditch. For high trailers, use an appropriately sized loading chute.

Let the cattle determine their flow into and off of the trailer. Hurrying them only increases their stress.

Make sure flooring in the sorting areas, alleys and trailer is not slick. Make sure all areas are well lit and avoid shadows.

### Loading

Only sort enough to load each compartment at a time. Set up

animals single file before the trailer door to prevent jams and reduce stress. Angling one side of crowd area results in less jams than angling both sides into the single file alley.

Make the load alley slightly narrower than trailer door to eliminate places that could injure or bruise cattle as they enter.

### Un-loading

Cattle generally will be in a hurry to get off the trailer.

Ideally swing open the whole rear door so they have less chance of jamming in the doorway trying to get off.

Have enough area and good footing in the area where they unload to minimize slips, falls and piling up.

## HANDLING CONSIDERATIONS

Clubs, pitch forks, hammer handles, crowbars etc. are not recommended aids in moving cattle. Bruising and injury from their use reduces the value of the animal and gives the industry a “black eye”. Always assume you are being watched; would your animal handling pass the YouTube test?

If you are having trouble getting the cattle to move during loading, look at the area and try to reduce causes of cattle stalling. For example, shadows, distractions, poor light and slick flooring may all cause cattle to balk.

Being in a hurry always leads to problems. So practice patience and use a calm, quiet voice. Remember, cattle:

- can only think about one thing at a time
- have nearly a 360° field of vision, with a blind spot directly behind them
- have no depth perception

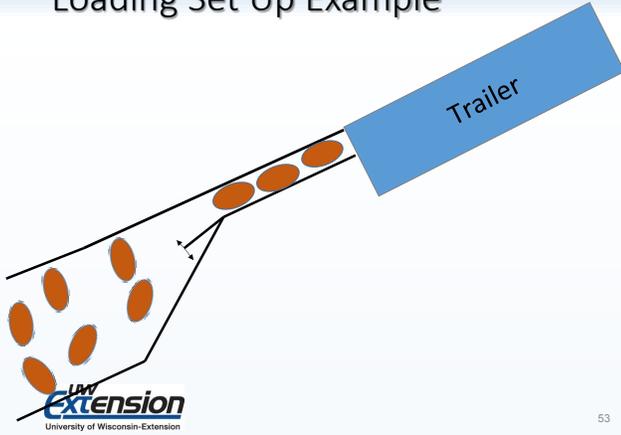


## QUALITY ASSURANCE

*“Beef Quality Assurance programs require that animals be handled in a manner that will result in a high quality product for consumers. Transporting animals from farm to farm or to the market must not jeopardize the quality of product already produced. Injured cattle will sell for less and bruising results in trim loss. Animals suffering from weather related stress will be more susceptible to disease. Taking care to follow these recommended transportation practices can result in higher quality beef, less trim loss, fewer injuries and a more profitable operation.”*

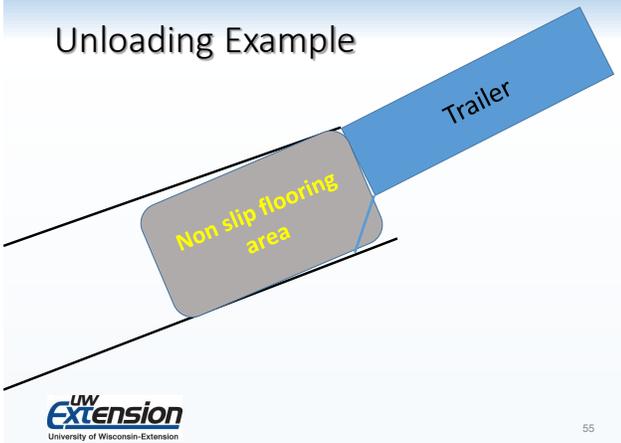
- Stock Trailer Transportation of Cattle, Transporting Cattle the BQA Way

### Loading Set Up Example



53

### Unloading Example



55

### Lost \$\$

- Death or serious injury of one animal far surpasses the cost of an extra trip to haul the cattle.
- Example: Hauling cattle 40 miles at \$5.00 a loaded mile = \$200.00

| Animal         | Weight (lb) | Price (\$/lb) | Value (\$) | Income Loss |
|----------------|-------------|---------------|------------|-------------|
| Feeder Calf    | 500         | 1.60          | \$800      | \$600       |
| Finished Steer | 1400        | 1.20          | \$1680     | \$1480      |
| Cull Cow       | 1400        | 0.70          | \$980      | \$780       |



59

## DOT Number

Exemptions from s.329.09(7) Wis. Stats. Motor Carrier Safety

Farm truck or dual purpose farm truck:

- For travel within WI

DOT number NOT REQUIRED when

GCVW, registered weight, and actual weight do not exceed 26,000 lbs.

- For travel outside of WI

As soon as truck or truck/ trailer combination weighs over 10,000 lbs. *or cross state lines*, then US DOT number IS REQUIRED



35

## How to Display DOT number

On both sides of the vehicle must have:

- Legal name or single trade name
- Motor carrier number preceded by "USDOT"
- In a color in sharp contrast to background color
- Readily legible from 50' away during daylight on stationary vehicle



36

These slides reflect our understanding from recent discussions with a WI State Patrol Motor Carrier Officer and not is offered as legal advice. Appropriate WI State Statutes are cited. Rules are subject to change. Our best advice is to contact the state you are hauling in to determine what is legal for your circumstances.

## CDL REQUIREMENTS

Per s.343.055(1)(c) Wis. Stats. Commercial Driver License Waivers

- CDL is NOT REQUIRED when hauling your own animals and this includes the farmer, family member, and farm employees, when the farm's truck and trailer are used within the state of WI. The CDL requirement is waived for Map-21, which has been extended to the whole state. When the GCWR is over 26,000 lbs. and/or cross state lines, then the 150 mile radius rule applies.
- CDLs is REQUIRED when hauling someone else's animals and a CDL with correct Class and Endorsements is REQUIRED, no matter what the distance of travel.

## FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT THIS FACTSHEET, CONTACT US AT

Bill Halfman, UW-Extension Monroe County

[bill.halfman@ces.uwex.edu](mailto:bill.halfman@ces.uwex.edu)

Sandy Stuttgen, UW-Extension Taylor County

[sandy.Stuttgen@ces.uwex.edu](mailto:sandy.Stuttgen@ces.uwex.edu)

Cheryl A. Skjolaas, Agricultural Safety Specialist,  
UW Center for Agricultural Safety and Health

## FOR OTHER BEEF INFORMATION, VISIT

The WI Beef Information Center, <http://fyi.uwex.edu/wbic>



**BEEF TRANSPORTATION QUALITY ASSURANCE CERTIFICATION**  
**FREE ON-LINE AT:** <https://bqatransportation.beeflearningcenter.org/>