

KEITH TAYLOR  
Green Party  
*for the South East of England*



Commissioner Dalli  
DG Health and Consumer Policy  
European Commission  
Rue de la Loi 200  
B-1049 Brussels

05 October 2011

Dear Commissioner Dalli,

I am writing to you regarding serious animal welfare problems in the exporting of EU animals to Turkey.

As you will be aware the EU exports a large number of live cattle and sheep to Turkey, for both slaughter and fattening, and this trade is growing at a rapid rate. The animals come from Member States such as Hungary, Bulgaria, Austria and Greece.

An investigation into the welfare of these animals that was undertaken by Compassion in World Farming, Eyes on Animals, and the Animal Welfare Foundation, has recently been brought to my attention. The investigation found that in over 40 animal transports at the border between Bulgaria and Turkey, many animals were being transported in ways that breach Council Regulation 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport. In particular, the animals are often not given the food, water and rest that are required by Regulation 1/2005. In addition, the ventilation systems, floor area and headroom provided are often insufficient to meet the Regulation's requirements. The failure to respect important provisions of Regulation 1/2005 results in many serious welfare problems and severe animal suffering. Similar problems were observed during an investigation carried out in April 2011.

The suffering is intensified by lengthy delays at the border caused by Turkey's insistence on checking that all animals meet its strict import requirements. During these delays - which can last for hours, even days - the animals are left on the trucks in blistering heat often without adequate ventilation, food and water. Inside the truck there are often elevated levels of ammonia from the filthy conditions and with temperatures found in the vehicles as high as 48°C.

Investigations into the slaughterhouses in Turkey have found that sheep are suspended upside down by their legs, without having been stunned, breaching the international recommendations of the OIE - the World Organisation for Animal Health - of which Turkey is a member. It is not known whether these examples of sheep being slaughtered in Turkey are European animals, however EU animals are unlikely to be treated any differently.

I urge you to put pressure on the Member States which are involved in this trade to take steps to ensure that the transport of animals to Turkey is carried out in compliance with Regulation 1/2005, and to liaise with the Turkish authorities in order to persuade them to take effective action to end the delays.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Keith Taylor". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish underneath the name.

Keith Taylor - Green Party MEP, South East England.