

# End Export Refunds For Breeding Cattle to Third Countries

Dear Members of the European Parliament,

The compromise amendment adopted last month by the Committee of Agriculture and Rural Development (AGRI) in its last vote for the Single CMO Regulation, meant that export refunds for breeding cattle to third countries are kept business as usual.

In fact, export refunds are maintained as a legal option– although presently fixed at zero-euro level - and can be activated in exceptional circumstances of crisis. Exceptional circumstances are defined as significant price rises or falls, or as a substantial rise in production costs. **This way, there is a risk that export subsidies can be regularly activated . We consider this wrong on several grounds.**

**Export refunds provide a substantial economic incentive to promote some long-distance transports of live animals, a practice known to cause unnecessary suffering for the animals, caused by injuries and pains, heat and cold distress, insufficient watering and feeding, lack of emergency infrastructure, insufficient ceiling height and ventilation. This should be avoided by eliminating all refunds for the export of breeding cattle to third countries.**

Not only do export refunds continue to cause harm to the animals, but they also distort international competition and impose an unreasonable burden on third country producers, many of whom are in countries with developing or least developed economies. Those countries generally cannot afford to pay subsidies, thus lose their export competitiveness to the benefit of richer competitors. A new Common Agriculture Policy should be fully in line with the Policy Coherence for Development objectives, and consistency between the CAP and EU's trade and development policy should be sought.

Over the years, Animals Angels have conducted countless inspections on live animal transports from the EU to Third Countries, and the conditions regularly observed in such transports are far from compatible with any basic animal welfare consideration.

In principle, refunds granted for the export of live animals are supposed to be in compliance with the provisions set in the EU legislation concerning animal welfare and, in particular, on the protection of animals during transport. **In 2011, refunds for a total of 8,366 heads of animals were not paid or were recovered due to lack of compliance with Regulation 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport, as these animals were found to have given birth or aborted onboard (60),**

been transported not in conformity with the norms of the Regulation (8248), or died during transport (58)<sup>1</sup>. These figures further demonstrate the fundamental flaws of the existing legislation, and the impossibility of its adequate and proper enforcement for long-distance animal transports.

Back in 2005 the European Commission stopped paying export refunds for live animals sent for slaughter to Third Countries. The European Union must now honour its commitment made at the 2005 WTO Hong Kong Ministerial Conference to phase out all export subsidies – including the ones for live animals – by the end of 2013.

We therefore call on the members of European Parliament to support our call for an end to export refunds for live animals.

Regards,



Camilla Björkbom  
President  
Djurens Rätt

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