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What do hernias indicate?

- Hernia is the popular term for a series of different diagnoses, all identified by umbilical/inguinal outpouchings on the ventral aspect of the abdominal wall of pigs. True hernia describes the condition where the outpouching is filled by viscera.
- They indicate underlying pathology, e.g., cysts, abscesses and fibrosis.
- Hernias can be painful and limit the mobility of pigs.
- In worst case, the outpouching may rupture, why pigs with severe hernias are not fit for transport.



{Annex I, Chapter I, Point 4.}: separation, veterinary treatment and/or killing of animals falling ill or being injured during transport.

{Annex I, Chapter I, Point 5.}: use of sedatives.



Note: Listed requirements are paraphrasing the literal text of the regulation and are not comprehensive. Moreover, there might be stricter national legislation in place. For a more detailed description on the specific requirements, see the review "[Fitness for Transport](#)".

Legal requirements



Council Regulation (EC) **1/2005**: Requirements associated with hernias:

{Annex I, Chapter I, Point 1.}: only fit animals shall be transported.

{Annex I, Chapter I, Point 2.b}: unfit animals present severe open wounds, or prolapse.

{Annex I, Chapter I, Point 3.a}: no additional suffering for slightly injured or ill animals.

{Annex I, Chapter I, Point 3.b}: transportation as part of a research programme.

{Annex I, Chapter I, Point 3.c}: transportation under veterinary supervision for treatment or diagnosis.

Inspection method (recommended)

- In case the planned journey is less than 8h, farmer and livestock driver have to assess fitness for transport before and during loading.
- In case the journey is more than 8 h, an inspector additionally has to be present at loading to assess fitness for transport of pigs.
- In any case, pigs will be assessed for **hernias**.
- Inspector reports findings to the farmer and/or livestock driver, and in case of discrepancies between legal requirements and situation during loading and transport corrective actions are taken to ensure the situation complies with legal requirements in the future.

Hernias occur when there is protrusion of a bodily structure or organ through the wall that normally contains it, resulting in a lump under the skin in the umbilical or inguinal area.

A hernia is considered as "serious" if it is more than 15-20 cm wide and present sores.

All animals must be observed from the front, back and side. If an animal show signs of serious hernia it is unfit for transport.

Score

Fit for transport?

Score 0

The hernia is smaller than 15 -20 cm (weight depending), with no sores/lesions. The pig's overall well-being seems unaffected.



YES

Score 1

The hernia is larger than 15- 20 cm (weight depending), with no sores/lesions. The pig's overall wellbeing could be affected.



YES,

but under conditions*:

- Pig to be isolated.
- Pig tagged with a coloured mark.
- FCI (Food Chain Information) to be completed.
- Transport not to cause unnecessary pain or suffering.
- The animal to be loaded last.

Score 2

The hernia is larger than 15 - 20 cm (weight depending) with sores. The pig's overall wellbeing is affected.



NO

Source scoring method: summarized from Welfare Quality® Protocol and *Practical Guidelines to Assess Fitness for Transport of Pigs



EU Reference Centre
for Animal Welfare Pigs

For any questions or suggestions regarding this factsheet please contact info.pigs@eurcaw.eu