

# US Border Closure Contingency Plan

***In the event of a border closure at  
Coutts, Alberta / Sweetgrass, Montana and Kingsgate, BC / Eastport, Idaho.***

## **For Loaded Commercial Livestock Units**

### ***Background***

The Office International des Epizooties (OIE) is comprised of member countries that are committed to the sanitary protection of their borders regarding diseases that not only decimate livestock but can infect humans as well. The OIE standards are recognized by the World Trade Organization.

The OIE currently has *Contingency Plans for Border Detainment or Refusal* at or near the top of their list of priorities for 2003. It has been suggested that a similar contingency plan should be considered in this province since Alberta and the United States are major trading partners.

### **Defining a Commercial Vehicle**

*For the purposes of this report a commercial vehicle is defined as a commercially registered and licensed tractor-trailer unit designed specifically for transporting the livestock on board.*



### ***Alberta, Montana Livestock Traffic***

An enormous amount of livestock traffic passes through the port of Coutts, AB / Sweetgrass, MT annually. Livestock traffic through this port is predominately cattle, horses and hogs. In the unlikely event of an immediate and unforeseen border closure between the two countries due to biosecurity, terrorism or any other cause, the ripple effect will undoubtedly suspend many loaded livestock units between their point of origin and the port.

| <b><i>Annual Estimates</i></b>          | <b><i>Numbers</i></b> | <b><i>Commercial Loads</i></b> |
|---|-----------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b><i>Slaughter Cattle Exports</i></b>  | 450,000               | <b>11,250 slaughter</b>        |
| <b><i>Feeder Cattle Exports</i></b>     | 450,000               | <b>5850 feeder</b>             |
| <b><i>Slaughter Hog Exports</i></b>     | 400,000               | <b>1800</b>                    |
| <b><i>Restricted Feeder Imports</i></b> | 200,000               | <b>260</b>                     |
| <b><i>Slaughter Horse Imports</i></b>   | 25,000                | <b>1000</b>                    |

Other **Southbound** animals;

- Recreational / show / breeding horses,
- Rodeo horses & cattle,
- Show cattle, sheep,
- Llama,
- Day-old chicks,
- Bison, deer, elk.



Other **Northbound** animals;

- Recreational / show / breeding horses,
- Rodeo horses & cattle,
- Show cattle,
- Slaughter Bison
- Exotic birds & reptiles, circus animals.
- Day-old chicks.



## *BC / Idaho Livestock Traffic*

Alberta livestock also utilizes the border crossing between Kingsgate, BC and Eastport, Idaho. An estimated 100 loads of southbound slaughter cattle pass through this port on a weekly basis, headed for major packers in Toppenish and Pasco, WA and Boise, Idaho. Volume is dependent on market variables. In addition, 20 loads of southbound market hogs destined for packers in Oregon and California are admitted into the U.S. each week through this port.

## *The Action Plan*

Representatives of the following groups have been contacted:

- **USDA**, Sweetgrass, MT - *Dr. Jim Becker*
- **CFIA**, Coutts, AB - *Dr. Peter Kelley*
- **USDA, Eastport, ID** - *Dr. MaryAnne Paulson*
- **CFIA, Kingsgate, BC** - *Dr. Shirley MacDonald*
- **Canada Customs & Revenue**, Coutts, AB - *Bill Axton*
- **Alberta Transportation**, Red Deer, AB - *Steve Callahan*
- **ICBC Scales**, Yahk, British Columbia - *Maurice Barry*
- **Emergency Management Alberta**, Edmonton, AB - *Dave Redman*
- **Alberta Pork**, Edmonton, AB - *Ed Shultz & Bill Mullen*
- **Alberta Cattle Feeders Association**, Calgary, AB - *Dr. Joyce Van Donkersgoed*

Input from these individuals has been considered in the final proposal for the **US Border Closure Contingency Plan**.

## **Concerns**

- Market hogs leaving Alberta production facilities cannot be returned to their barn of origin or the biosecurity protocol of the barn will be compromised. Therefore, these loads must be redirected to holding areas until they can be dealt with.
- It is undesirable for loaded livestock units to be stranded in a lineup at the border, unable to free themselves and provide the proper ventilation or care for the animals on board. It is imperative that loaded units be apprised of a border closure **before** they enter the port lineup and become entrapped.
- Emergency Management Alberta (EMA) is working closely with provincial, federal and US agencies to allow for cooperation in the event of a threat to any of the infrastructure within the province including bio-terrorism activity within the food supply or agriculture sector. It is important to keep EMA involved in any developing situation regarding livestock transportation as it relates to security.
- A border closure is not cause for alarm or a prompt for livestock vehicle operators to react with desperate actions that may put the livestock in jeopardy (eg. releasing the livestock from the trailer and relinquishing control of the animals).
- There may be rumor or innuendo that a closed border may soon reopen resulting in false expectations on the part of the truckers.

# US Border Closure Contingency Plan

## **Dealing With Loaded Livestock Vehicles Entering The Border Of Coutts, AB / Sweetgrass, MT or Kingsgate, BC / Eastport, ID.**

### **Delegation Of Responsibilities.**

The **Primary** contact will be **AFAC**, 1-800-506-2273.

The **Secondary** contact will be **CFIA**, port of Coutts, Alberta, 1-403-344-3808.

The **Reserve** contact will be the office of **Alberta Pork**, Edmonton, Alberta, 1-403-440-8455.

In the unlikely event of a closure of land traffic ports of entry between Canada and the United States, specifically Coutts, AB / Sweetgrass, MT and/or Kingsgate, BC / Eastport, Idaho these procedures will be initiated;

1. The Primary, Secondary or Reserve contacts will ensure that the **Contact List** is apprised of the situation within two hours.
2. The Primary contact or Acting Primary (Secondary or Reserve) contact will ensure that the Contingency Plan is enacted for the 24 hours following the closure.
3. The Alberta Transportation scale at Coutts will serve as a Plan Information Dissemination point for **southbound** loaded livestock vehicles heading into Montana. Drivers will be apprised of the situation before they continue further. Loaded livestock vehicles will be discouraged from proceeding towards the port lineup in order to avoid becoming boxed-in.
4. The British Columbia scale at Yahk will serve as a Plan Information Dissemination point for **southbound** loaded livestock vehicles heading into Idaho through Kingsgate, BC. Drivers will be apprised of the situation before they continue further. Loaded livestock vehicles will be discouraged from proceeding towards the port lineup in order to avoid becoming boxed-in.
5. The USDA Inspection Facility at Sweetgrass, Montana, will serve as a gathering point for northbound loaded livestock vehicles. The USDA personnel manning the facility will be apprised of the Plan and will disseminate the information.
6. At the discretion of the livestock transport company, after consultation with their clients, loaded livestock vehicles may be redirected in the following manner:

- **Southbound market hogs** that cannot be returned to their barn of origin may proceed (in this order) to the Western Hog Exchange on highway 3 east of Lethbridge, Alberta or; Perlich Auction market south east of Lethbridge off highway 3 or; or Vanee Livestock, in the industrial area of east Lethbridge.
- Northbound and southbound **cattle** may return to their point of origin to be offloaded and cared for.
- Southbound **horses** may return to their point of origin to be offloaded and cared for.
- Northbound slaughter horses may be redirected to the Shelby, Montana feedlot belonging to Bouvry Exports Calgary Ltd. with authorization from the owner or agent.
- **Baby chicks** may return to their point of origin.

### **OTHER LIVESTOCK**

- All other livestock to be returned to point of origin.

### **Liability of the Caretaker**

**Acceptable animal husbandry practices and animal protection laws apply to the decisions made by the caretakers to relocate or care for the livestock.**

### **Contact List**

**AFAC** 1-800-506-2273  
**CFIA** Coutts, Alberta  
Dr. Kelley 1-403-344-3808  
**USDA** Sweetgrass, Montana  
Dr. Becker 1-406-335-2142  
**CFIA** Cranbrook, BC  
Dr. MacDonald 1-250-417-2293  
**USDA** Eastport, Idaho  
Dr. Paulson 1-208-267-2396  
**Alberta Pork**  
Bill Mullen 1-403-440-8455  
**Alberta Cattle Feeders Association**  
Dr. Van Donkersgoed  
1-403-782-5153  
**Alberta Transportation**  
Steve Callahan 1-403-340-5166  
**ICBC Scale, Yahk, BC**  
Frank Estey 1-250-424-5459  
**Canada Customs & Revenue Agency**  
Bill Axton 1-403-344-3770  
**Emergency Management Alberta**  
Dave Redman 1-780-422-0349

### **REDIRECTION OF LIVESTOCK**

**Western Hog Exchange**  
Nick Santangelo 1-403-327-5323  
**Perlich Auction Market**  
Bob Perlich 1-403-329-3101  
**Vanee Livestock**  
Ron Vanee 1-403-328 7331  
**Bouvry Exports Calgary**  
Claude Bouvry 1-403-553-4431