

Press Release

26th February 2020

A week of action to Ban Live Exports

This week (24th – 28th February), leading farm animal welfare charity Compassion in World Farming is lobbying Prime Minister Boris Johnson to fulfil his promise to ban live animal exports.

The Conservative Party manifesto made a commitment to “abolish” live animal exports and Compassion is urging the Prime Minister to deliver on his pledge with a series of bold digital adverts at Westminster, Oxford Circus, Victoria, Vauxhall, Green Park and St James’ Park London tube stations. These are joined by print adverts to run in tomorrow’s issue of the Evening Standard and this week’s edition of The Spectator – a newspaper previously edited by the Prime Minister himself – which is distributed to all MPs.

“The Prime Minister has repeatedly promised to abolish the live shipment of animals once we leave the EU. This week, we are seizing the opportunity to help turn Boris Johnson’s words into actions and end this cruel trade,” says Natasha Smith, Campaigns Manager at Compassion in World Farming.

The week will culminate with the appearance of a digital ad van, which will carry Compassion’s message throughout London, starting at Johnson’s constituency of Uxbridge and travelling to Westminster, where Mike Beckingham and Peter Egan will join members of the organisation at 10 Downing Street to hand-deliver an open letter to the Prime Minister.

High Profile Supporters of the charity, including Dragons’ Den Investor Deborah Meaden, actor Joanna Lumley and TV chef Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall, along with twenty-eight others, have signed the open letter, which urges the Prime Minister to keep to his word and ban live exports once and for all.

Downton Abby actor and letter signatory, Peter Egan said: *“Too many animals have been forced to suffer these intolerable journeys for too long and urgent action must be taken now to stop this cruel, outdated trade once and for all.”*

In tandem with this week’s campaign actions, yesterday (25th February) Compassion launched judicial review proceedings against the Scottish Government for permitting the transport of unweaned calves on export journeys longer than eight hours. Under EU law journeys over eight hours are not permitted, unless after nine hours of travel the calves are fed with milk replacer and given water. In practice the calves are not fed and, in many cases, not given water.

Each year thousands of young, fragile calves are exported from Scotland to Spain on long and gruelling journeys, during which Compassion believes this law is being ignored.

“For too long, the Scottish Government has been permitting these long journeys, even though they know the calves are not fed after nine hours as EU law mandates,” said Peter Stevenson, Chief Policy Advisor at Compassion in World Farming. *“If the calves are not fed after nine hours, they are likely to travel 23 hours or more without feed. Being without feed for such a long period may lead to hunger, weight loss, difficulty in coping with cold and heat, adverse impact on the calves’ immunity and so to disease.”*

Compassion has asked the Scottish Court of Session to rule that it is unlawful for the Scottish Government to permit the export of unweaned calves on journeys over eight hours. If successful, this case would make it impossible for long-distance transport to continue in its current form.

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For more information please email media.team@ciwf.org or call 01483 521 886

Social media assets/ images can be downloaded [here](#).

Notes to Editors

- 1 Compassion in World Farming was founded in 1967 by a British dairy farmer who became horrified at the development of intensive factory farming. Today Compassion is the leading farm animal welfare organisation dedicated to ending factory farming

and achieving humane and sustainable food. With headquarters in the UK, we have offices across Europe, in the US, China and South Africa.

To find out more about Compassion in World Farming visit: www.ciwf.org

- 2 The Conservative 2019 Election Manifesto pledged to 'end excessively long journeys for slaughter and fattening', and after they formed a new Government this also featured in the briefing documents for the Queen's Speech.
- 3 In 2018, over 19,234 sheep and 5,150 calves were exported from Great Britain to the EU. Average journeys are in the range of 17-25 hours.
- 4 On journeys of over nine hours, EU law states that unweaned calves should be rested for a period of one hour, so that they can be given liquid (water) and 'if necessary fed'. For unweaned calves, feed takes the form of milk replacer and it is widely recognised that milk replacer cannot be provided to calves while they are on a truck. This can only be done if the calves are unloaded into an appropriate facility, but in practice the calves are rarely, if ever taken off the truck during the one-hour break and so are not fed.