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LIVESTOCK TRANSPORT

News, updates and advice from your Red Tractor assurance team

JULY 2023

MEET YOUR TECHNICAL MANAGER **JEMMA HOLDEN**

Jemma joined Red Tractor in 2020. She grew up on the family sheep farm in Lancashire where they run to 650 Texel cross and Cheviot Cross ewes. Still involved with the farm she is always hands on with lambing in the spring. Upon



completing her degree in Animal Behaviour and Welfare she took on the role of an animal welfare inspector for an independent organisation in partnership with a UK retailer. Her responsibilities included conducting supply chain inspections in retail, manufacturing, and both food and

non-food supply chains, which took her to various locations across the USA, Europe, and Asia.

Jemma's deep roots in the livestock industry also extend to overseeing the Red Tractor Dairy, Beef and Lamb scheme, along with the management of the Livestock Markets and Collection Centre scheme.

Protecting reputations amidst animal activism

In recent years, there has been a significant rise in animal activism, reflecting a growing concern for the welfare and rights of animals. Increased access to information and technology (such as drones) has allowed for the dissemination of compelling visuals and stories highlighting the mistreatment of animals. The revelations are designed to spark public outrage and motivate individuals to act.

Activist activity is likely to increase over the summer and exposes which uncover non-compliance to the Red Tractor standards damage the reputation of the entire industry and undermine Red Tractor in the eyes of consumers, customers, and government. Year round compliance is essential for all hauliers – the small

minority who flout the rules can cause serious and far-reaching repercussions.

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Transporting animals exposes vulnerabilities that activists may seek to exploit. For animal activists, the entire process of loading livestock into vehicles serves as a reminder of the broader issues within the animal agriculture industry and reinforces their beliefs of the need for greater advocacy and reforms to protect the rights and well-being of animals.

Therefore, it is crucial to be vigilant and aware of specific areas where risks are heightened.

● **Loading animals:** From an animal activist perspective, loading livestock into vehicles carries inherent risks that raise concerns about animal welfare. The transport process can subject animals to various stressors, such as cramped spaces, temperature extremes, and periods of confinement. Additionally, loading procedures may involve methods that activists deem cruel or abusive, such as the use of prods, restraints, or other coercive techniques. So, make sure livestock are handled calmly and gently during the loading process, make sure they are not frightened, mistreated, or forced.



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Don't rush the livestock at loading (or unloading). Provide adequate space, ensure that the animals are neither overcrowded nor too loosely stocked and are also properly segregated. Never load distressed or visibly injured animals on to the vehicle. Remember, loading and unloading is often

that prioritise the well-being of animals. In accordance with the Standards, electric shocks can be used as a final option for mature cattle, sows, and boars that demonstrate resistance and show signs of distress or agitation, only after all other alternative methods have been exhausted.

positive image and showcase a genuine commitment to animal welfare, it is crucial to prioritize the health and fitness of animals before embarking on transportation.

GOVERNMENT GUIDANCE: Do not transport animals when external temperatures are more than 30°C, unless in temperature-controlled vehicles

done in large spaces with good lighting - ideal for planting cameras.

● **The use of goads:** The use of goads on livestock raises ethical concerns for activists and can create a negative public perception of animal handling practices. It can be seen as a form of aggression or cruelty, tarnishing the industry's reputation. Relying on goads for control, even when allowed within the standards, can undermine the development of more humane and effective handling techniques

● **Animals not fit to travel:** Transporting animals that are not suitable for travel not only violates legislation and Red Tractor standards but also poses a considerable risk of attracting the attention of animal activists. The act of loading unfit animals into vehicles raises concerns about their well-being and treatment, which could be perceived as neglectful and thoughtless. Such actions are likely to draw criticism from animal rights advocates, potentially resulting in public backlash. To uphold a

STANDING TIME IN HOT WEATHER

Minimising standing time for livestock vehicles in hot weather is vital for animal welfare. High temperatures risk heat stress, dehydration, heat stroke and ultimately increased numbers of dead on arrival. Limited ventilation in confined spaces worsens these risks. Efficient loading and unloading, scheduling during cooler times, providing shade, ventilation, and water are crucial to reduce harm caused by heat stress. By prioritising the reduction of standing time in hot weather you will mitigate the risks to livestock.

REVIEWING THE LIVESTOCK TRANSPORT STANDARDS

As you may already know Defra consulted on improvements to animal welfare in transport back in 2020/21, and although no legislation has come forward addressing the issues raised in the consultation, any updates will need to be incorporated into the Red Tractor standards.

Reviewing the Red Tractor standards is a crucial undertaking aimed at maintaining the ongoing efficiency and appropriateness of the scheme. Thorough evaluations enable us to incorporate new

industry practices, scientific progress, and evolving consumer demands into our standards where appropriate. Our Livestock Transport standards were last updated in 2016 as such, it is timely for them to undergo a thorough examination.

Once we have a clear understanding of the upcoming changes to legislation, the Standards review process will commence. We will actively engage a wide range of stakeholders, including scheme members,

industry experts, and animal welfare organisations, to ensure a comprehensive and balanced evaluation of any proposed changes to the Standards.

These reviews play a vital role in maintaining the strength, responsiveness, and alignment of the Red Tractor standards with the evolving needs of the sector. Ultimately, they aim to foster consumer confidence in the quality and integrity of products certified under the Red Tractor scheme.

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Robust Certification at every link in the supply chain

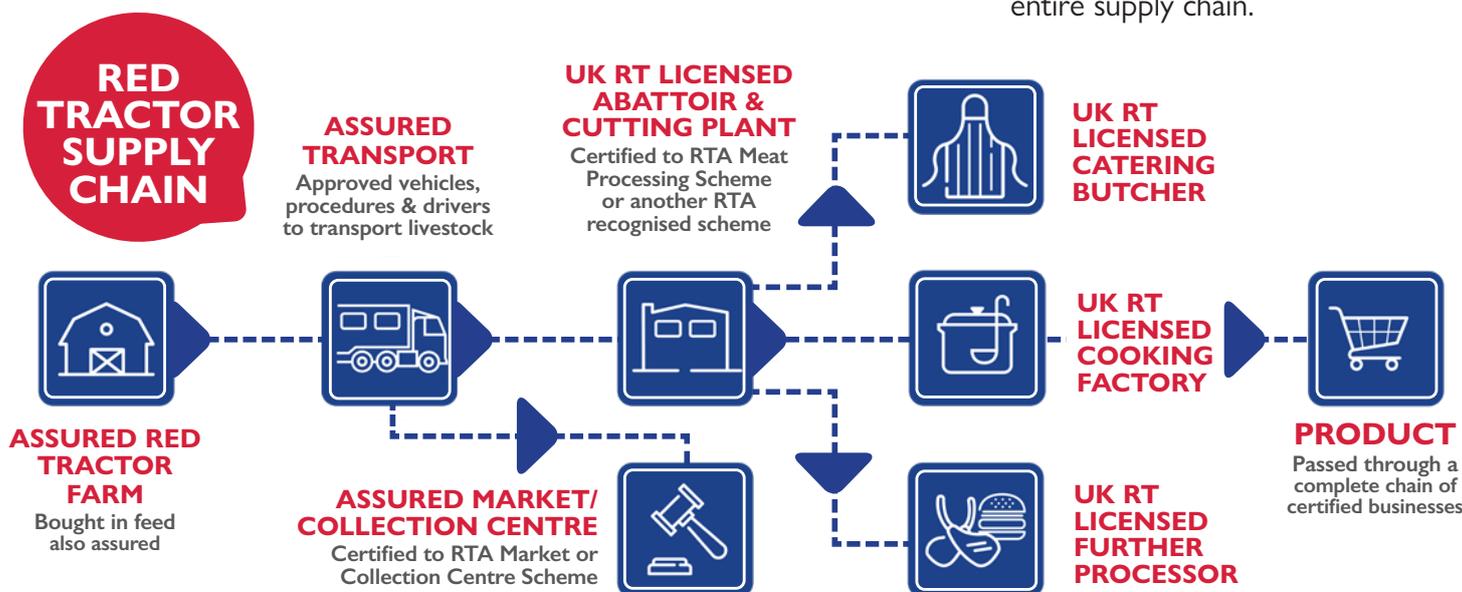
The presence of the Red Tractor logo serves as a reliable indicator for consumers, signifying that the food they are purchasing has been produced according to stringent standards at every stage of the supply chain, from the farm to the final packaging. Within this chain, livestock hauliers play a crucial role.

To maintain the integrity of our certification, it is imperative that all our members consistently meet

our standards, and it is essential for us to be promptly informed about any concerns regarding non-compliant practices that violate our rules and standards. Should you have any concerns about the standards or practices on any Red Tractor farm, abattoir, market or haulier, please report them directly to Red Tractor or your certification body. Additionally, we have introduced an anonymous reporting service called **TELL US**

through our web platform, and we have reinforced our collaboration with other reporting authorities to enhance our ability to assess issues and gather comprehensive information for thorough investigations.

All these measures collectively contribute to safeguarding the robust chain of assurance and ensuring ongoing compliance with the highest standards across the entire supply chain.



WELFARE TRAINING FROM AHDB



Did you know that everyone involved in the care, moving, and handling of pigs must complete online welfare training as part of Red Tractor standards? This includes livestock hauliers.

Training is not a new requirement for Red Tractor; our standards have long emphasised the need for competent staff. Assessors

have been checking records to ensure that you and your workforce have received effective training and have been deemed competent in relevant tasks. We understand that many hauliers and their workers already possess extensive experience in moving and handling pigs. However, implementing consistent accredited training for everyone

will enable the entire industry to showcase its professional and positive approach to pig welfare to customers and consumers. This ensures that everyone adheres to the same standards and possesses a clear understanding of acceptable behaviour when interacting with pigs. Ensuring compassionate treatment of all livestock pigs is crucial for their



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welfare and maintaining the public's trust in the UK livestock industry.

The training platform has already seen significant participation, with over 7,000 individuals, farmers and people working in the supply chain, either having completed the handling training or are currently undergoing the training process. Many pig hauliers have already undergone the training, but it is essential for businesses to ensure that all new staff members complete the training to maintain compliance with Red Tractor standards.



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Supply chain shows support for welfare training

Animal welfare has become an increasingly important issue for many consumers. People are more conscious about the treatment of animals and are concerned about ethical sourcing and sustainability. Retailers recognise this shift in consumer preferences and are prioritising animal welfare to attract and retain customers who value these principles.



A representative from Morrisons said "At Morrisons, we know animal

welfare is an important priority to our customers as they tell us this every year in annual surveys asking them what they look for in a responsible retailer.

We rely on the whole supply chain to play their part in helping assure animal welfare, so we can sell food in the knowledge that animals have been well cared for"

They added "Farm assurance schemes play an integral role in

ensuring these standards are met and that food is safe, high quality and farmed with care. Working closely with farmers and stakeholders across our supply chain, we know that livestock hauliers are an essential part

"Working closely with farmers and stakeholders across our supply chain, we know that livestock hauliers are an essential part of animal welfare management."

of animal welfare management. Farmers rely on hauliers to safely transport their livestock and maintain the high welfare standards delivered on farms throughout the UK"

"Animal welfare needs to be at the forefront of everyday working practices for every haulier business. Engraving a 'welfare first' mentality into business culture ensures all

livestock are fit for transport and are transported and correctly handled in a way that promotes best practice during penning, loading, travelling and unloading; all of which are important to minimise animal stress and injury and ensure high standards of animal welfare are maintained from the farm to the processing site"

"As an industry there has been some great work already undertaken to promote best practice handling techniques through the AHDB Pig Handling training, recognising the importance of understanding and responding to animal behaviour, with this training now required to be completed by all Woodheads third party livestock hauliers and drivers who handle pigs"

"We look forward to continuing to work closely with all stakeholders to continuously develop standards and practices, maintaining the future of our industry we are all proud of."