



Safe Transport of Poultry and Gamebirds in Kansas

When preparing to transport birds to shows, fairs, and sales in Kansas, follow these guidelines to prevent loss and disease while increasing bird comfort and production.

Find out if you need a permit

Within Kansas, you do not need a permit to transport birds to the fair, bring chicks or birds home, or move them to another farm. Proof of a negative *Salmonella pullorum* test is required for sales, auctions, shows, and other events where birds are comingled.

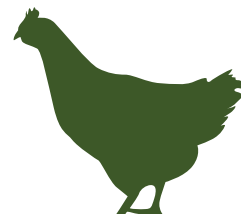
Before bringing birds or chicks into the state, you must obtain a permit issued through the Kansas Department of Agriculture. The application requires owners to obtain an animal health certificate showing birds tested negative within 90 days before entry or were moved directly from a pullorum/typhoid clean flock in the state of origin. Allow several weeks for this process.

Before moving birds to another state, check with the agriculture department in that state for regulations on transporting fowl.

Minimize stress when handling

Stress can weaken a bird's immune system and increase the chance of disease. Catching and handling, along with food and water deprivation, unusual temperatures, wind, and loud noises during transport can trigger this response. To minimize risk, avoid carrying birds by wings, tails, or heads, and keep them upright as much as possible.

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Clean and disinfect before loading

Dirty trailers, truck beds, and coops should not be used for transport. Bacteria and viruses can survive for weeks in caked material. Clean and sanitize equipment and vehicles before loading birds to leave the farm.

Group by species, age, and weight

Birds of various sizes, weights, ages and species should be caged separately. Broilers and turkeys do not handle heat well. They should be kept out of direct sunlight and given plenty of room. Because of their lighter weight and greater heat tolerance, more pullets can be grouped together. Wire cages are best for transporting broilers. Birds can die quickly if placed in a show bird box without adequate ventilation. Caged broilers should be protected from wind but must receive plenty of indirect airflow. Poultry cages are not recommended for moving pheasants, quail, and other gamebirds. These birds are naturally explosive when they start to fly. A secure, well-latched cage is needed to keep birds from forcing their way out. Most gamebird transport cages are 7 inches tall. If placed in a tall cage or stock trailer, birds can harm themselves trying to fly.

Offer the right amount of space

Confining too many birds in the same space may lead to overheating, bruising, and broken wings. The average chicken needs a cage about 8 inches wide by 12 inches long and 10 inches tall. Space requirements vary depending on temperature. Birds need less space when it is cool than when it is warm and they need more ventilation. The cage should have a rigid floor with walls that keep wings and necks from protruding. Beware of sharp edges, nails, and broken wires that can cut or bruise. A cardboard box works for short trips as long as it has holes cut in the sides for ventilation and is kept dry and protected from the wind.

Give birds room to breathe

Birds do not have sweat glands. They lose heat by respiration, relying on air movement for survival. A key sign of heat stress is an open mouth with throat vibration, known as gular flutter. Shipping boxes allow air to enter through holes in the top and sides and flow around the chicks. Avoid stacking boxes tightly or placing them against a wall

or a seat, which restricts air movement. Chicks produce a significant amount of heat and gas and should not be carried inside a vehicle without adequate air circulation from outside. Keep breaks to a minimum while traveling. When you stop, open doors and windows to let fresh air in. Good air circulation is essential, even when the temperature is cooler than desired. Keep birds dry, especially in cold weather. Avoid moving birds during excessively cold temperatures, which can lead to frostbite and stress.

Place birds on sound footing

Baby chicks, broilers, and turkeys are prone to falling on slippery surfaces. Stopping and starting stresses birds struggling to stand and can lead to permanent lameness. Place wood shavings, straw, paper, and other loose material in coops to soak up wet manure and keep the floor from becoming slick. Avoid cages with wire bottoms or holes. Birds that get their toes caught between the crate and floor may be injured if cages slide. Choose a solid-bottom cage and line with 3 to 4 inches of shavings or straw to prevent injuries and keep manure from spilling.

Remove food, but not water

Remove feed 4 to 6 hours before transport to reduce stress and the amount of bird waste in cages. There is no need to offer birds food and water on short trips. If traveling more than 3 or 4 hours, attach a water dispenser to the side of the pen and refill during breaks.

Don't become a road hazard

Secure cages in the back of a truck or other vehicle. Stacked cages can collapse under shifting weight, injuring birds and creating a hazard for other drivers. Avoid sudden stops that move birds inside their cages and may cause the load to shift.

Practices to avoid

- Transporting birds in bags or burlap sacks.
- Moving birds with their legs tied.
- Confining birds in a trunk or toolbox.
- Mixing different sizes or species in a single crate.

R. Scott Beyer, Poultry Specialist, and C.J. Delfelder, Poultry Farm Manager

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