

## **Israel rejects Australian sheep shipment**

Further suspension rocks controversial live export trade.

Israel has suspended imports of live sheep from Australia. Citing the health status of a previous shipment of sheep, Israeli veterinary authorities refused to accept a shipment of 10,000 Australian sheep on arrival in Israel on 3<sup>rd</sup> November. The exporters were then forced to unload the animals in Jordan.

The rejected shipment aboard the livestock vessel *MV Maysora*, is also the subject of an official Australian Quarantine Inspection Services (AQIS) investigation, due to the large number of cattle which died during the 21-day journey to the Middle East. Despite the surviving cattle being unloaded in Israel, local sources have advised that hundreds of animals have subsequently died in the Israeli feedlot [*photos available*].

Animals Australia's Executive Director Glenys Oogjes states;

*"We won't know what went wrong on this shipment until the official investigation is completed. What is clear even now is that this cruel trade has once again resulted in animals suffering and dying unnecessarily."*

Also on board the *Maysora* were 40,000 sheep destined for Egypt – the final port of call for this shipment.

*"These incidents extended what was already a dreadful journey for animals destined for Egypt. Not only did these 40,000 unfortunate sheep have to endure nearly a month on board this vessel, they then had the great misfortune of being the first animals sent to Egypt since the government suspended the trade on welfare grounds."*

Animals Australia backed by the united voice of all major international animal welfare organizations, is calling for an end to Australia's live trade to the Middle East.

*"This latest incident provides further evidence of the unacceptable risks animals face on every vessel that leaves Australia. Combine these risks with the known terrible treatment that Australian animals receive when they reach importing countries, and it is impossible to justify the continuation of this cruel trade," said Ms Oogjes*

The Voyage: The *MV Maysora* shipment loaded sheep and cattle in Portland Victoria on 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> October, before sailing to Fremantle for further loading. The shipment eventually left Australia on 18<sup>th</sup> October. The vessel then arrived in Israel on 3<sup>rd</sup> November, Jordan 5<sup>th</sup>, and Egypt on 10<sup>th</sup> November.

***Further information or comment:***

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