

Gov. Branstad issues Disaster Emergency Proclamation to assist livestock producers and farmers impacted by drought

DES MOINES – Today, Gov. Branstad issued a disaster emergency proclamation that will provide relief to Iowa farmers hit hard by the drought being experienced in the state.

This proclamation takes effect at noon today for the next 60 days. The assistance comes in the form of a suspension of state laws and regulations affecting the transport of hay, straw and stover. The drought has destroyed or depleted sources of these products that are necessary for livestock production and feed.

Specifically, this proclamation allows for:

- **Overweight loads:** Hay, straw and stover may be transported in loads weighing up to 90,000 pounds gross weight without obtaining an overweight permit normally required by the Iowa Department of Transportation. Overweight loads cannot travel on the interstate without a permit. This proclamation applies to noninterstate roadways. Specific axle weight limits do apply. Visit the Iowa DOT's website www.iowa.dot.gov to see the maximum gross weight table and determine the legal limits for your vehicle/trailer combination. A vehicle that is overweight, but not overwidth, can travel at all hours.
- **Overwidth loads:** A vehicle transporting these goods can be overwidth, without an Iowa DOT permit, if they do not exceed 12 feet 5 inches wide. An overwidth load can travel on any road, including the interstate, as long as its gross weight does not exceed 80,000 pounds. Movement must occur between the hours of 30 minutes before sunrise and 30 minutes after sunset. All flags, signs and lights normally required are still needed.
- **Overweight and overwidth loads:** A vehicle transporting these goods can be both overwidth, up to 12 feet 5 inches, and overweight, up to 90,000 pounds. However, these vehicles cannot travel on the interstate.
- **Driver hours of service:** The driver hours-of-service regulations pertaining to persons transporting these specific agricultural goods are suspended. Certain rest periods must be provided to drivers to prevent fatigued or ill drivers from operating on the roadways.

For additional details, call 1-800-925-6469 or visit the Iowa DOT's website at www.iowadot.gov where a question-and-answer sheet can be found.

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