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February 17, 2004

Lidia and Harry Zawada
40 Stuyvesant Ave., Apt #2
Lyndhurst, NJ 07071

FSIS Docket Clerk
Docket 03-0251F
Room 102, Cotton Annex
300 12th and C Street SW
Washington, DC 20250-3700

To Whom It May Concern:

We are writing to express our strong support for the ban on human consumption of downer animals. We feel the ban is the only way to protect consumers from contracting fatal diseases, such as Mad Cow Disease.

In addition, this ban would finally begin to address the appalling conditions in American's factory farms. The animals are raised and slaughtered under the most inhumane and barbaric conditions. This ban gives the meat industry an incentive to prevent their animals from becoming sick and injured, thus requiring better treatment of the animals.

We feel that lifting the ban would be grossly irresponsible. Safety controls of the meat supply must be determined by the USDA, not by the billion-dollar agribusiness, which seek to make profits at any cost, even to the detriment of the public's safety.

We want the USDA to keep the ban intact, and we do not want it weakened in any way. Further, we want the ban on downers extended to all species, including cows, sheep, and poultry. While the existing ban would go a long way toward preventing people from contracting Mad Cow Disease, it does nothing to protect against equally fatal illnesses contracted from other species.

Respectfully,

Lidia and Harry Zawada

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