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DOWNED ANIMALS NEED PROTECTION

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3/3/04

the journey from feedlot to slaughterhouse is one of the worst experiences in the miserable existence of animals destined for the dinner table, brutally prodded and packed into unheated, uncooled tractor-trailers, jostled, bounced, and terrified, denied even water during rides that can last for days, many cows, pigs, and sheep arrive at stockyards too injured or ill to even walk. Stockyard workers call these tragic animals "downers," and have traditionally piled them in heaps to die slowly (often in the blazing sun or frigid wind) while those who can still walk are kicked and prodded up the slaughterhouse ramp. One large cow, her neck broken, was left to die painfully and slowly in a Texas stockyard.

"At stockyards, I have seen cows dragged with ropes because they are too sick or injured to walk. I watched a dairy cow with a broken pelvis being moved in a bulldozer. I have seen a number of cows unable to walk [transported] in the bucket of bulldozers. At a slaughterhouse, I saw a newborn calf seperated from her mother and left to die. Baby male Holstein dairy calves barely able to walk were being auctioned off daily. I saw a cow unable to walk dumped outside on a pile of dead animals, where she...froze."

---Julie Derby
Slaughterhouse Investigator

Farm Sanctuary has convinced some stockyards to adopt a "no downer" humane treatment policy. For stockyards that will not do so voluntarily, statewide laws must be immediately passed, and strictly enforced mandating that nonambulatory animals be humanely killed BEFORE being transferred or marketed. It is imparative that this vast and agonizing aspect of the meat and livestock industry be specifically delt with by requiring that downed animals be promptly and humanely euthanized, including those animals that tragically become downers once in the system, which is equally vital to stringently enforce to ensure the full protection of suffering, helpless downers.

Source: People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA)