

427

Debbie Netardus
2108 Stone Croft St.
Las Vegas, NV 89134

RECEIVED
FSIS DOCKET ROOM
04 MAR 10 PM 12:52

United States Department of Agriculture
FSIS Docket Clerk
Docket 03-025IF

To: USDA

I wish to congratulate you for finally instituting measures to ban the slaughter of downed cattle for human consumption (even if it is a few decades late). Common sense and science dictate that consumption of diseased flesh is unhealthy and contributes to spread of illness. More importantly, as long as sick, injured, and suffering animals had market value there was no incentive to keep the animals healthy and tend to their injuries. Basic necessities such as food, water, and even enough space to breathe are denied animals on their way to slaughterhouses. Weak, young, and injured animals are dragged around at auctions with total disregard for the pain and fear the animals feel. And, yes, they do feel. They are sentient beings and there is not a biologist or veterinarian in the world who will deny their capacity for suffering. I do not see how our society can call itself "civilized" while these atrocities are carried out against other species, just because we can.

I strongly urge you to make the ban permanent and to include all downed animals—sheep, pigs, and other livestock, as well as cattle—in the final ban. And please add a requirement that all downed animals that cannot be treated be **humanely** euthanized immediately, wherever they become downed. Future generations will no doubt view current practices as barbaric and their perpetrators as ignorant and cruel. Have the courage to do what is right—now. Thank you.

Sincerely,
