

March 18, 2004

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FSIS Docket Clerk
Docket 03-0251F
Room 102, COTTON annex
300 12th and C Street SW.
Washington, DC 20250-3700
Fax: 202-690-0486

Dear USDA representative for the downer ban,

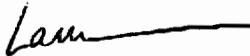
It is clearly unconscionable to lift the downer ban after evidence of its humane advocacy for the treatment of animals. I entirely support the USDA's proposed rule to prohibit downer cattle in the human food supply and for that matter all downer animals including and not limited to goats, sheep, and pigs. Optimally, downer animals should be humanely euthanized before transport and if they fall ill during transport, immediately upon arrival to the slaughter facility. That translates as, before they are dragged, trampled and unnecessarily exposed to unnecessarily abusive movement.

If the inhumanity of the way these animals are raised, treated and killed were not grotesque enough, what possible food value would people expect from these deadly diseased and otherwise ill animals. The very environment, in which the majority of corporate agriculture exists, is inhumanely substandard to realize health in any of the animals. It's no wonder; these animals are consistently at risk, due to deplorable living conditions, systematically practiced in corporate agriculture. The safety of the food we are provided from these concerns therefore is also at risk to US, a largely unsuspecting and ignorant population exposed to these hazards.

Sustainable populations thrive because their food chain is clean and desirably nourishing. Marketing efforts, if balanced would not only share with the public at large the apparent reduced food prices due to corporate agriculture as we know it in the U.S., but also the inhumanity in which they are passively partaking. At that point, then consumers can responsibly vote with their pocketbooks. Provide information that allows consumers, individuals, to ethically and sustainably participate in their own health.

Thank you for the efforts involved in remaining open to public input on maintaining the downer ban. Without your support our entire food system is at risk, which means us.

Sincerely,



Laura C. Swift
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Lake Forest, IL 60045