

Center Creek Dairy LLC

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MARCH 31, 2004

To: Docket Clerk, Docket # 03-025IF

RE: Public comments on ban of down cows.

As a dairy farmer for twenty years, I wish to express the following comments on down cows. The majority of down cows from dairy farms are not necessarily affected by diseases that are harmful to humans. Many of these animals are unable to rise due to nerve and muscle damage that has resulted from lying too long on one side due to a metabolic disorder that causes the muscles to not function properly or from paralysis that has resulted from a difficult calving. In most cases the carcasses of these animals are still useable. An animal that breaks a bone and is unable to rise is not a risk to the population in that it is not a diseased animal. I believe that our countries meat inspection program is top notch and it should be left to the inspecting veterinarian to determine if these carcasses from down cows should enter into the human food chain. If every carcass from down cows are held and tested for a required battery of diseases and that carcass is not released for consumption until the results are final, then there is very little or no risk involved in slaughtering these animals. By banning down cows, you have eliminated a large number of animals that were routinely tested for BSE, and various other diseases. Unless mandatory testing of all carcass becomes law you have no good way of monitoring for BSE and other diseases.

Sincerely,



Eric Campbell
Center Creek Dairy, LLC