

# Eickman's Processing Company

502

February 25, 2004

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FSIS Docket Clerk  
Docket #D30251F, Room 102, Cotton Annex  
300 12<sup>th</sup> and C Street SW  
Washington, DC 20250-3700

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Dear FSIS Docket Clerk:

I am writing as the owner and operator of a small processing plant in Northern Illinois regarding BSE. Since the discovery of BSE in the state of Washington, FSIS has issued a ruling that all disabled cattle be excluded from the food chain. This ruling was not well thought-out and is not acceptable. The action should have been intended to exclude older cattle that have neurological diseases, not young cattle that have a fresh break or injury. At the most a qualified veterinarian could and should be utilized to determine an animals disposition. This would eliminate the senseless waste of animals that are capable of being used for human consumption.

Many of the finished beef animals under 30 months of age that break a leg or split out have a hard time gaining their feet. They can stand, but once they lay down they have a lot of difficulty getting back up. Feedlots will lose a lot of revenue if injured animals have to be condemned needlessly.

Over the years I have seen older Dairy animals that had neurological problems that were addressed by qualified veterinarians and disposed of through the proper channels. The new directive also eliminates the possibility of labs receiving testing material for BSE because small processors such as myself cannot accept down animals.

Please reconsider this directive to prevent the needless waste of qualified animals for human consumption and to prevent the needless loss of revenue to our family farmers and feedlots.

Sincerely,



Michael P. Eickman  
President