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January 20, 2004

FSIS Docket Clerk  
Docket 03-0251F  
Room 102, Cotton Annex  
300 12th and C Street SW.  
Washington, DC 20250-3700

I'd like to first thank the USDA for the emergency decision to ban the slaughter of downed cattle for human consumption. It is important to keep sick and injured animals out of the food system to protect both people and animals from disease.

Every day, cows, pigs, and other "farmed" animals suffer from abuse, injury, and disease. These animals are often too sick to stand or walk on their own. Although the animals are suffering terribly, they are still slaughtered and sold for human consumption.

I ask that you make this ban permanent and include all downed animals from being sold for meat. This will not only encourage farmers to treat animals more humanely and prevent them from becoming "downed" in the first place, but will also keep diseased meat out of the marketplace. Any animal that does become downed should be humanely euthenized immediately.

Thank you for your prompt consideration.

Sincerely,



Dana Sommers  
Philadelphia, PA