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5836 Vermont St. - Merrillville, IN 46410

February 12, 2004

FSIS Docket Clerk
Docket 03-025IF
Room 102, Cotton Annex
300 - 12th and C Streets SW
Washington, DC 20250-3700

RE: Docket No. 03-0251IF Downed Animals


Gentlemen:

While the ban on the slaughtering of downed animals is long overdue, it lacks several fundamental points:

1. The ban needs to be made permanent. Initiating the ban simply because the world refuses to buy American beef due to the mad-cow discovery is a coverup for the real reasons the ban needs to be put in place.
2. The ban needs to apply to ALL farmed animals - not just cows. Sheep, pigs and other livestock can and do suffer the same types of debilitating injuries or weaknesses due to transport that cause them to become non-ambulatory.
3. The ban needs to mandate that all downed livestock be humanely euthanized WHERE THEY LAY. There is no humane way to transport a downed animal and they would have to be bulldozed or lifted by crane or forklift, which will only add to their suffering.

The bottom line here is obvious: If the slaughter industry would only put the animals first, instead of the almighty dollar, laws like this would not be necessary. But since greed rules the day, mandate once and for all the humane transport and handling of livestock and enforce strict penalties for those who violate the law. In the end, the slaughter industry would find that it is much simpler for them to take proper care of the animals in their possession rather than face harsh fines or other sanctions, and FINALLY things would improve for the animals.

Respectfully,


Cheryl Adam