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IOWA MEAT PROCESSORS ASSOCIATION

Kenneth and Marcia Richmann, Executive Directors
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FSIS Docket Clerk, Docket #03-0251F
Room 102 Cotton Annex
300 12th & C Streets S.W.
Washington, DC 20250-3700

Dear Clerk:

We are Executive Directors of the Iowa Meat Processors Association. We are writing to state our position regarding the ban on non-ambulatory cattle.

Upon the discovery of BSE in the United States, the USDA/FSIS response to not let the meat from downed animals enter the food chain was appropriate. This action was necessary to assure the consumer a safe food supply.

We do not know of any processing plant in Iowa that is dependent upon downed animals; however, because of the severe winter conditions, all plants in our state receive some animals with broken appendages. The banning of all downed animals causes the processor to lose revenue and the producer to lose the use of their animal. Animals that are non-ambulatory because of a broken appendage should be allowed to be processed for the producer's exclusive use. An affidavit from a state veterinarian or the local veterinarian verifying that it was non-ambulatory because of a broken leg rather than a neurological disease should qualify the animal for home use.

Thank you for your consideration of our opinion on this matter.

Respectfully,

Kenneth and Marcia Richmann
Executive Directors
Iowa Meat Processors Association
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