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February 12, 2004

FSIS Docket Clerk
03-025 I F
Room 102 Cotton Annex
300 12th Street SW
Washington, DC 20250-3700

Dear FSIS,

I would like to make some comments concerning "03-025 I F" (the ban on downer cows). We have dairy cows on our farm. Sometimes cows, during birthing, will experience pinched nerves in the pelvic area. Thus, causing the cow not to be able to get up. We then have to get rid of that cow. Other cows may slip and fall, breaking a bone in a leg or causing them to split their rear legs making them disabled. This winter we have had very icy conditions to contend with.

There are acute injuries that happen very often and without warning. We don't like to deal with these injuries, but that is a part of the business of dairy farming. I do not look at these cows as downers from sickness, but instead as cows with acute injuries. We need a place to take these animals to be able to utilize or salvage at least part of the animal. It creates an economical hardship if we have to put down the animal and bury it. I believe there is a need for slaughter houses, where we can get a small compensation instead of total loss.

Please consider the definition of downers to **not** include animals with acute injuries. Therefore allowing these type injury animals to be sold and slaughtered.

Thank You,

Harmon Hentaber

Address:

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