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5620 Robert Scott Dr. N.
Jacksonville, Florida 32207
February 9 2004

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

RE: Docket 03-025IF, USDA's Downed-Animal Ban Is Insufficient

The current temporary ban on downed animals has not a single measure to address animal welfare. This is not surprising, since it has taken years to get this far, and only because the health of people is at stake from mad cow disease. As it now stands, injured or sick animals can still be forcibly moved to slaughter by use of forklifts, chains and electric prods. The meat can be put into pet food and for uses other than for human consumption. The new ban also does not cover other kinds of farm animals, and yet we do not know to what extent Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies (TSEs) can cross over to other species.

The Downed Animal Protection Act should provide for the following:

Humane euthanasia for all farm animals

A Ban on moving downed animals

Mandatory training to prevent animals from becoming downers in the first place

A ban on the use of downed animals for 'pet' and 'livestock' foods

Enforceable and permanent implementation

I strongly encourage the USDA to strengthen and enforce measures to protect animals and the public by including the measures as outlined above.

Sincerely,


Jacqueline Eckert