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Lena Maid Meats  
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Lena, IL 61048  
815-369-4522  
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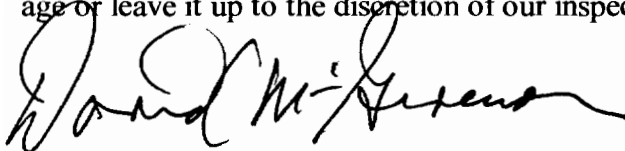
February 18, 2004

Re: FSIS Docket #03-0251F

To Whom It May Concern:

In the past two weeks we have had three requests from cattle feeders to slaughter fat steers that slipped on the ice and were down. These were animals that were under 24 months of age and were perfectly sound before they slipped. The farmer was trying to salvage some value. Unfortunately, because of the Emergency Regulations we had to refuse them. Their only alternative is to call a dead stock truck or to hang them up in a shed and attempt to slaughter and process the animal by themselves somehow. Either alternative is a bad one.

There is no scientific justification to not allow the processing of down animals under 30 months of age. Even our inspection personnel can't understand it. Our farm customers are having a hard enough time without inflicting more loss on them. I am requesting that you reconsider the ban on processing beef animals that are down and under 30 months of age or leave it up to the discretion of our inspection personnel.



David McGiveron  
President