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February 22, 2004

Mrs. Cynthia DeLuca
7 Glover Circle
Lynbrook, NY 11563

FSIS Docket Clerk
Docket 03-251F
Room 102, Cotton Annex
300 12th and C Street SW
Washington, DC 20250-3700

Dear FSIS:

I am writing to express my disapproval of the proposal to eliminate the downed animal ban. This regulation should have been put in place many years ago, but the USDA routinely gave in to the billion-dollar agribusiness industry at the expense of public safety. The USDA was forced to implement this ban after averting a potential catastrophe. Now that action has been taken, it should remain in place.

It is outrageous that public policy is once again in the hands of a greedy, unethical, immoral industry that want to eke out every last penny from sick, injured, abused animals. This is wrong! Public policy, especially one as important as food safety, must remain in the hands of government, not industry.

The ban must not only remain in place (and not weakened), but must also be extended to all animals. It is ridiculous to think we can contract fatal diseases from eating only sick cows and not other species.

In addition to the food safety issue, I believe this ban will also push agribusinesses to treat the animals more humanely. If they lose money from downers, then it follows that they will try to prevent animals from becoming sick and injured in the first place, which can be done only through more humane treatment.

Respectfully,

Cynthia DeLuca