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January 15, 2004

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

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am aware that the USDA banned the slaughter of "downed" cattle — those who are too sick or injured to stand or walk on their own. I also know that while this ban protects downed cattle right now, it is only a temporary measure. To enforce this prohibition permanently, a final, formal version of these rules must be approved.

My understanding is that on Monday, January 12, the USDA published its proposed guidelines for dealing with BSE, including a prohibition on the slaughter of downed cattle. These rules, which are open for public comment, stipulate "all non-ambulatory disabled cattle presented for slaughter be condemned."

It is imperative that the the ban on downed cattle slaughter remain permanent. For years, the cattle industry lobbied to allow downed cattle suffering from broken legs, disease and other injuries to be slaughtered for human food. There MUST be no exemption for any downed animal

I am writing to thank your agency for your emergency measures to ban the slaughter of downed cattle for human consumption. I urge you to make the ban permanent, and to include all downed animals — sheep, pigs and other livestock, as well as all downed cattle — in the final ban. Finally, I ask that you add a requirement that all downed animals be humanely euthanized immediately, wherever they become downed.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Renee P. Snyder, Ph.D.