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April 8, 2004

FSIS Docket Clerk
Docket #03-0251F
102 Cotton Annex
300 12th St. SW
Washington D.C. 20250-3700

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

The USDA will accept public comments on a rule banning the slaughter of all non-ambulatory or downer cattle for food.

WOW! First of all the USDA has caused us great economic distress financially and emotionally, not only for our family, but for many other families that were involved with working with non-ambulatory animals.

We are Fourth generation livestock dealers, now unemployed, since December 31, 2003. We were in business for many years, but the USDA and Ann Venneman closed our business for us on New Years Eve, we sure had alot to celebrate for that night. Needless to say we didn't get alot of sleep that night or many nights to follow.

We are still getting twenty to thirty calls weekly for downer animals. Downer animals that have broken legs, torn ligaments, or pulled muscles, that are perfectly good to eat, but now instead that meat is getting wasted.

Farmers used to get paid for these kinds of animals, but now they have to pay to get rid of them. The USDA was quick to blame the BSE on a down animal. We find it rather interesting that the government could do this so quickly, within one week. I've been calling since January 2, 2004, to various different government agencies and asking how they could help us with our business, and to this day, we haven't received no funds to help keep our business afloat.

Was that animal really a DOWNER? How is the investigation going with the Government Reform committee? How many animals have been tested since December 31, 2003? How many animals are walking threw slaughter pens each day that could possibly be infected with BSE?

The USDA are in our opinion hypocrites, the only animals getting tested before were downers, and the USDA veterenarians were doing their jobs, by inspecting these animals and passing them if they were fit for human consumption, and taking the BSE samples on these animals.

Now there aren't any samples being taken! GREAT! So theres no problem and NO BSE! Why do companies take Urine and Drug Samples of employees? If there were no samples ever taken, there would be NO PROBLEM!

Our Great State of Wisconsin has CWD in our deer population. Its a proven fact, but did the State of Wisconsin put a ban on deer hunting. NO! How could they, because it gives alot of government officials a great paying job with benefits and the State of Wisconsin, MAKES A LOT OF INCOME OFF OF IT. I wonder is CWD at all associated with BSE, you tell me, but I already know that answer.

We have to be licensed and bonded to be livestock dealers, have a CDL license to drive a commercial truck and carry high priced commercial insurance on our vehicles. We were in business for many years, and to be shut down by the USDA, is a big kick in the face.

We've already sold one new 2004 truck and trailer that was purchased the end of 2003. Business's that shut down and tell their employees, have to pay severance pay. We are still waiting for the checks to come in the mail from the USDA. I sure hope that Ann Venneman and the rest of the officials that made this hasty decision aren't getting paid, but we already know that answer.

Our ads have had to come out of newspapers, we had over 100,000 flyers that had to be thrown out, by the way, everything was already paid for its not the fault of printing people, they did their job.

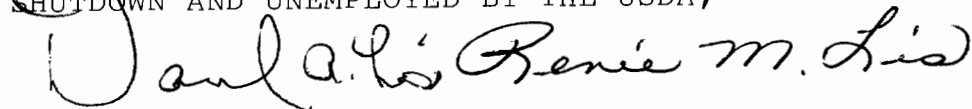
The USDA has no clue how many lifes have been affected because of this interim final rule. The USDA has closed down our business, you wrecked the livelihood of the slaughter plant in Washington, and many more of them, that did do non-ambulatory animals. Don't forget about the lost business for gas & diesel stations, insurance companies, car & truck dealerships, phone companies, cellular phone companies, grocery stores, furniture stores, clothing and shoe stores, newspapers, advertising agencies and list goes on! We probably won't be paying much federal and state income tax either, maybe the USDA official should take a pay decrease.

Don't forget about the slaughter plants that had to lay off workers, because of your final interim ruling. Were looking for jobs, the administration says the economy is getting better, send some jobs this way! Eau Claire, Wisconsin, is 50 miles west of Thorp, just last week, they lost 600 jobs in that city. We already looked that way, before, now its no use. We'll have to go to the east, the next closest town is Wausau, hour and half away, one way.

The BOTTOM LINE is, What kind of compensation will we be getting for the USDA shutting us down and ruining our business?

We seriously hope that you take a good long look at this final interim rule, and decide to do non-ambulatory animals that have broken legs, pulled muscles, or torn ligaments. Please feel free to contact us with your response. We will be waiting for a reply!

SHUTDOWN AND UNEMPLOYED BY THE USDA,



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