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To: United States Department of Agriculture

Due to the encounter of mad cow disease, there have been a number of rules concerning the slaughter of downer cattle. Since then the Minnesota Department of Agriculture has issued permission to custom processing plants to slaughter downer cattle under certain conditions.

As the owner of a custom processing plant, I believe that we (custom processing plants) should be allowed to slaughter downer cattle in accordance with the conditions stated in the letter from the MN Department of Agriculture. These conditions - including the requirement of a written diagnosis from a veterinarian - I believe, are reasonable and yet control and limit the processing of animals that could be a health hazard to the consumers - namely excluding sick animals from slaughter. I believe that a licensed veterinarian has the knowledge and authority to diagnose an animal accurately and can determine if it is fit or unfit to eat! I believe it to be a sacrilegious waste to throw away a good steer with top quality meat simply because it has a broken leg or similar injury. (Especially when you consider people in other areas of the world who die of hunger!) As custom processing plants, we slaughter and process these animals only for the farmer. Therefore this meat does not enter the food chain and the inconvenience and loss is to be carried by the farmer. I do not believe that I must be forced to turn away 15% of my business, simply because of this occurrence of mad cow disease.

I ask you to seriously take this into consideration.

Sincerely,



Ivan Tinklenberg
Owner of D & T's Meat Market
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