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Docket Clerk
US Dept. of Agriculture
Food Safety & Inspection Service
300 12th Street, SW
Room 102, Cotton Annex
Washington, DC 20250

RE: Docket # FSIS 2006-0040.

Hormel Foods has petitioned the USDA to use the misleading and confusing label, "natural" to processed food products.

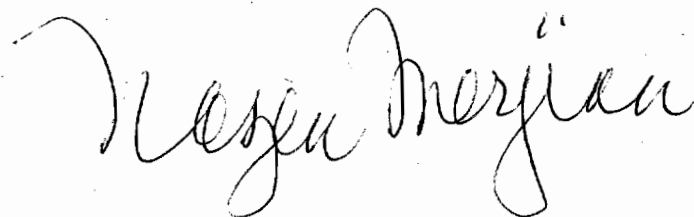
Animal products obtained from animals who are raised completely indoors, deprived of living space and stimulation appropriate to the species, does not fit most consumers' expectations of a "natural" product, regardless of how the meat from the animal is processed after its slaughter.

"Natural" meat products can come from animals who experience:

1. Genetic alterations.
2. Animals packed in indoor warehouse-like factories for their whole lives.
3. Animals that do not experience natural outdoor environments or fulfill basic instincts.
4. Unnaturally rich diets designed for economic profitability.
5. The routine use of antibiotics
6. The routine administration of growth hormones.
7. Painful mutilations (de-toeing, de-beaking, de-horning and castration performed without anaesthesia.
8. Intensive production without regard for the animals' welfare.

We oppose the use of the "natural" label on factory farmed meat products for the above reasons.

Sincerely,



Nazen Merjian, VFA