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2001 FEB 22 P 12: 22

The Honorable Ann Veneman
Secretary of Agriculture
U.S. Department of Agriculture
14th Street and Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20250

COPIES: _____

97-013P-16
97-013P
Robert Pratt
Zoe Nierenberg

February 15, 2001

Dear Secretary Veneman,

I urge you to approve immediate publication of the proposed regulation, "Performance Standards for the Production of Processed Meat and Poultry Products." Although the USDA previously sent it to the Federal Register, it was never published.

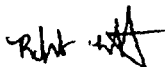
A Listeria outbreak prompted this regulation. That outbreak sickened one hundred consumers and killed twenty-one. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that Listeria causes 500 deaths and 2300 hospitalizations per year. You now have the chance to save people's lives by approving publication of this regulation.

Listeriosis is not just a disease of the very young and the very old. People who have diabetes, cancer, or asthma are also at a higher risk for developing it, as are people on certain types of drugs, such as corticosteroids.

Current regulations do not require meat processors to test either their plants or their products for the potentially deadly Listeria bacterium, even though products containing this hazard are regularly recalled. Did you know there was a recall on cheese contaminated with Listeria on January 10, 2001? What if you would have eaten that cheese? You might have died or become seriously ill! The proposed regulation will protect you from that kind of exposure, and will save many lives. It would require meat and poultry processors to do microbial testing to insure that their food-safety controls are working.

This critical health and safety regulation should be released on an emergency basis. Please protect consumers from this deadly bacteria and approve this regulation immediately.

Sincerely,



Robert Pratt
225 Hyde St. #216
San Francisco, CA 94102

06-4174518
F'SIS

The Honorable Ann Veneman
Secretary of Agriculture
U.S. Department of Agriculture
14th Street and Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20250

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01 MAY 14 11:11:24

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE
SECRETARIAT, USDA
2001 FEB 22 A 10:37

COPIES: _____

February 13, 2001

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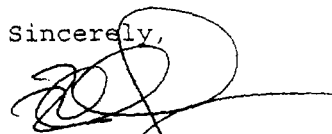
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Sincerely,



Zoe Nierenberg
38 Herrick Road
Boxford, MA 01921

06-4175014
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