

U.S. Food and Drug Administration
Dockets Management Branch
5630 Fishers Lane, Room 1061
Rockville, MD 20852

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February 17, 2001

Dear Dockets Management Branch,

I have just read about the serious problem of downed animals in stockyards being used and abused for human consumption. By using sick animals there is an increased risk for bacterial contamination. There is also evidence that some downed animals may be afflicted with a form of Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy ("Mad Cow Disease"), a disease which has been linked to a fatal human illness, Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease.

It is impossible to move downed animals humanely. They are typically pushed with tractors or dragged with chains, which results in various injuries ranging from bruises and abrasions, to broken bones and torn ligaments. Or, they are abandoned to die a slow and painful death from neglect or disease.

Downed animals comprise a very small percentage of animals slaughtered and prohibiting their marketing will cause no undue economic hardship. Industry experts have estimated that 90% of downed animals cases could be prevented with better care and handling. Removing the market for downed animals will provide an incentive to industry to improve their livestock's living conditions.

I urge you to do everything possible to see that stockyards stop accepting and selling downed animals by granting the petition to prohibit their slaughter - docket number 98P-0151/CP1. Thank you.

Sincerely,



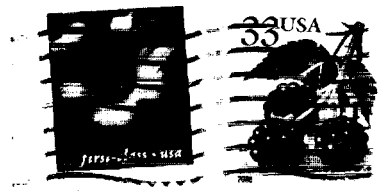
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