

January 23, 2001

U.S. Food and Drug Administration  
Dockets Management Branch  
Docket No. 98P-0151/CP1  
5630 Fishers Lane, Room 1061  
Rockville, MD. 20852

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Dear FDA:

I'm writing to express my full support for Petition 98P-0151/CP1 to prohibit the slaughter of downed animals. I'm asking that you grant this vital protection for suffering, helpless animals.

I'm gratified to know that the USDA will no longer accept ground beef that includes product from non-ambulatory cattle, commonly known as "downers." I highly commend the USDA, which last year, announced a landmark policy to stop purchasing meat from downed cows for federal programs, including the National School Lunch Program.

As an animal defender and a school cafeteria worker, I am extremely pleased about these progressive developments, and shows a growing consensus—even among industry and government officials—that the marketing of downed animals is unacceptable.

Here are some of the vital points that I wish to make:

\*Animals who are too sick or injured to stand should NOT be allowed to enter the food chain.

\*In addition to posing an increased risk for bacteria contamination, there is evidence that some downed animals may be afflicted with a form of BSE (Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy or "Mad Cow Disease"). A disease which has been linked to a fatal human illness (CID or Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease).

\*It is impossible to move downed animals humanely, and they are typically pushed with tractors or dragged with chains--inhumane processes which cause injuries ranging from bruises and abrasions, to broken bones and torn ligaments.

\*Downed animals comprise a very small percentage of animals slaughtered, and prohibiting their marketing will cause no undue economic hardship.

\*Industry experts estimated that 90% percent of downed animals can be prevented with better care and handling. Removing the market for downed animals will provide an incentive to industry to prevent downed animals in the first place.

I have long abhorred and condemned factory farming, and the agonizing reality of downed cows. I continue to demand the immediate end of this sentient commercial misery. We MUST seize this rare opportunity to stop this massive animal carnage.

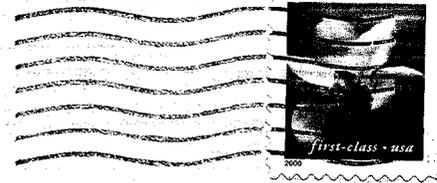
Sincerely,

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