

Maria Weizmann-Jaramillo
13510 Ironton Drive
Tampa, FL 33626

9 6 1 0 '01 FEB -5 10:04

January 30, 2000

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

Docket #: 98P-0151/CPI - The Downed Animal Act

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Downed Animal act would amend the Packers and Stockyards Act of 1921 to make it unlawful for any stockyard owner, market agency or dealers to transfer or market non-ambulatory cattle, sheep, swine, horses, mules or goat.

As you may know, last year the USDA announced a landmark policy to stop purchasing meat from downed cows for federal programs including the National School Lunch Program. The agency stated, "USDA will no longer accept ground beef that includes product from non-ambulatory cattle, commonly known as 'downers'." This development shows that the marketing and slaughter of downed animals is unacceptable.

Downed animals are animals that are too sick or injured to stand and should not be allowed to enter the food chain. In addition to posing an increased risk for bacterial contamination, there is evidence that some downed animals may be afflicted with a form of BSE, commonly known as Mad Cow Disease. Further, it is impossible to move downed animals humanly so they are typically pushed with tractors or dragged with chains. These are inhumane processes that cause injuries ranging from bruises and abrasions, to broken bones and ligaments.

Downed animals comprise a very small percentage of animals slaughtered, and prohibiting their marketing will cause no economic hardship. Also, industry experts have estimated that 90% of downed animals can be prevented with better care and handling. Removing the market from downed animals will provide an incentive to industry to prevent downed animals in the first place.

Please grant petition 98P-0151/CPI to prohibit the slaughter of downed animals.

Respectfully,


Maria Weizmann-Jaramillo

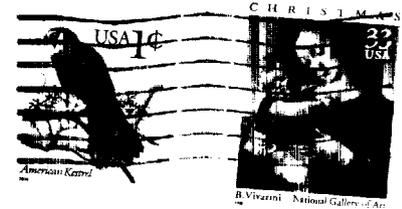
98P-0151

C 3845-



Center for Marine Conservation
PROJECT CLEAN OCEAN

Ms. Mary P. Jaramillo
13510 Ironton Dr.
Tampa, FL 33626-2966



US Food & Drug Administration
Dockets Management Branch
5630 Fishers Lane
Room 1061
Rockville, MD 20852

HFA
305

20857/0003

