

83 Charter Oak Dr.
East Lyme, CT 06333
March 12, 2001

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

Dear FDA:

I am writing in support of the petition that has recently been submitted to you, which asks that the slaughter of downed farm animals be prohibited. (Docket # 98P-0151/CP1) Downed animals are those animals too sick or injured to stand. Due to the increased risk of bacterial contamination, animals that are too sick to even stand should not enter the human food chain. There is even evidence that some downed animals may be afflicted with a form of bovine spongiform encephalopathy, or "Mad Cow Disease".

In addition to the risk that the consumption of downed animals poses to human health, I am concerned about the welfare of these animals themselves. There is no humane way to move a downed animal; they are typically dragged with chains or lifted with a forklift, causing suffering and further injuries. Downed animals comprise a very small percentage of animals slaughtered, and prohibiting their marketing would cause no undue economic hardship. In fact, removing the market for downed animals would encourage better treatment and handling, thus preventing most downers in the first place. There is growing consensus for such a prohibition, even among livestock industry and government officials. Numerous beef, dairy, and pork industry representatives have voiced support for such a prohibition.

Please consider the many voices of concerned Americans on this matter. Act now to protect our health and the wellbeing of our farm animals by prohibiting the slaughter and sale of downed animals.

Sincerely,



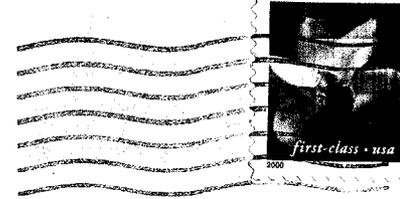
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