

July 9, 2001

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Commissioner
USDA
Dockets Management Branch
5600 Fishers Lane
Room 1061
Rockville, MD 20852

Dear Commissioner:

The use of downed animals in the human food supply may be a violation of federal law. Existing USDA regulations define downed animals as "diseased" and the law prohibits the slaughter of "diseased" animals for human food.

Diseases like bovine leukemia virus (BLV), bovine immunodeficiency virus (BIV), and others commonly afflict US cattle. There is also evidence that cattle, pigs, and sheep in the US may be afflicted with diseases like Britain's "Mad Cow Disease" (bovine spongiform encephalopathy or BSE).

Last summer, the FDA banned certain animal bi-products from being used in livestock feed because it was concerned about a potential threat of BSE in the US. This action is a positive step, but further measures are necessary to reduce the threat of BSE in the US.

A sick cow, unable to stand, is pulled off a truck by a tractor, falls four feet to the ground and is dragged through an auction ring by a rope tied to its back leg while another calf, nearly comatose, is left in a corner dying. These are downed animals.

Please act on docket number 98P-0151/CP1 and make a rule which bans the slaughter of downed animals for human food.

Sincerely,

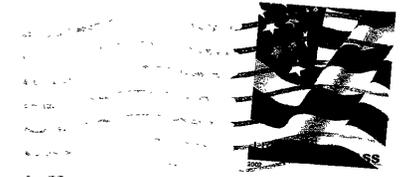


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98P-0151

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