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**TAKE A STAND**  
**- COMMENTS DUE BY APRIL 12, 2004 -**

2 / 3 / 2004

To: AAMP MEMBERS  
MEAT SLAUGHTERS AND MEAT PROCESSORS  
LIVESTOCK PRODUCERS

SUBJECT: COMMENTS DUE BY APRIL 12, 2004 ON HARVESTING AND/OR PROCESSING OF NON-AMBULATORY CATTLE

Due to the discovery of single Holstein cow from Washington State that tested positive for BSE or what is widely known as mad cow disease, a variety of "knee-jerk reaction" regulations have been implemented. Although AAMP applauds the USDA for their rapid response to this issue, AAMP believes that the current regulations that have been established need refinement and be based on science instead of public perception. Individuals who question this new rule or have comments concerning this issue should voice opinions to the USDA as well as their Congressman and Senators.

AAMP is strongly encouraging its members to submit comments concerning the restrictions of non-ambulatory animals. Additionally, AAMP is encouraging other meat slaughterers and processors, as well as livestock producers to submit comments. Individuals affected by the non-ambulatory restrictions should protest the restriction on the slaughter of animals who have become non-ambulatory because they have broken appendages due to injuries suffered in feedlots, in trucks on the way to slaughter, or in other locations. While it is justifiable not to allow animals that are suffering from central nervous system disorders or similar illnesses to be used for human food, the same is not true of animals that have suffered physical injuries, such as broken legs. There is no food safety issue raised by the use of such cattle in the food supply.

We also think that processors and producers should speak out about the restrictions placed on the use of non-ambulatory injured animals in custom processing. While ambulatory animals can be slaughtered and processed on a custom basis, the same restrictions on injured cattle with broken appendages apply in this area, for no reason that can be justified scientifically.

Finally, AAMP recommends that small slaughterers and processors protest the lack of any reimbursement from USDA to producers and slaughterers who suffer losses as a result of the condemnation of all injured and non ambulatory cattle. State inspected plants should also protest to their representatives in their state legislatures, because they are being forced to operate under the same restrictions. You are being penalized for problems beyond your control, and nobody is taking any steps, which should include compensation to help processors and producers deal with these government-imposed financial losses.

We also encourage meat processors to discuss this issue with the livestock producers that supply the cattle for their establishment. Encourage the livestock producers to contact USDA, Congress, as well as their state and national livestock associations. As this is an interim final rule, there will be a 90-day period to make comments which may result in changes after the interim period. Comments are due by April 12, 2004 and can be submitted to:



FSIS Docket Clerk, Docket #03-025IF  
Room 102 Cotton Annex  
300 12<sup>th</sup> & C Streets SW  
Washington, DC 20250-3700

In order to get in touch with your members of Congress, go to [www.congress.org](http://www.congress.org) and enter your zip code. Your two U.S. Senators and U.S. Representative will be posted, with easy ways to contact them, including e-mail, phone and regular mail.