

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
FOOD SAFETY AND INSPECTION SERVICE
WASHINGTON, DC

FSIS NOTICE

09-13

2/1/13

DISPOSITION OF NON-AMBULATORY DISABLED CATTLE

I. PURPOSE

A. This notice contains the same policies and instructions from FSIS Notice 76-11. This notice continues to provide clarification to inspection program personnel (IPP) and Public Health Veterinarians (PHVs) regarding the procedures that they are to follow when the establishment presents non-ambulatory disabled cattle for ante-mortem inspection, including cattle that are temporarily down (i.e., non-ambulatory disabled) because of a reversible condition (e.g., parturient paresis, ketosis, pneumonia, arthritis, injury, or one of the other conditions identified in 9 CFR 309.13 (b)). The instructions are to assist PHVs in making consistent decisions on the disposition of non-ambulatory disabled cattle.

B. PHVs are to condemn non-ambulatory disabled cattle after ante-mortem inspection and to verify that the establishment promptly euthanizes these cattle. For humane handling reasons, all non-ambulatory disabled cattle, except for veal calves that are non-ambulatory because they are tired or cold, are to be promptly euthanized rather than being set aside for treatment. Cattle slaughter classes covered by this notice are identified in Section III. E.

C. The instructions in this notice supersede the instructions on the disposition of non-ambulatory disabled cattle in FSIS Directive 6100.1, Revision 1, "Ante-Mortem Livestock Inspection."

II. BACKGROUND

A. FSIS is issuing this notice to address concerns with the humane handling of non-ambulatory disabled cattle and to ensure that cattle are humanely treated and slaughtered when presented for inspection at FSIS-regulated facilities. The regulations provide that non-ambulatory disabled cattle must be condemned and euthanized by the official establishment (9 CFR 309.3(e) and 309.13(a)). In the preamble to the 2009 final rule, "Requirements for the Disposition of Cattle that Become Non-Ambulatory Following Ante-Mortem Inspection," FSIS explained that "...humane handling requires that [all non-ambulatory disabled cattle] be promptly euthanized" (74 Federal Register 11464).

B. Non-ambulatory disabled cattle are cattle that cannot rise from a recumbent position or cannot walk, including, but not limited to, those with broken appendages, severed tendons or ligaments, nerve paralysis, fractured vertebral columns, or metabolic conditions, or that are temporarily down (i.e., non-ambulatory disabled) because of a reversible condition (e.g., parturient paresis, ketosis, pneumonia, arthritis, injury, or one of the other conditions identified in 9 CFR 309.13 (b)).

DISTRIBUTION: Electronic

NOTICE EXPIRES: 2/1/14

OPI: OPPD

III. VERIFICATION INSTRUCTIONS

A.

When establishments present non-ambulatory disabled cattle to IPP for ante-mortem inspection, IPP are to notify the PHV.

B. PHVs are to designate these animals as U.S. Condemned (9 CFR 309.3)).

C. After condemning non-ambulatory disabled cattle, PHVs or other IPP are to verify that establishments promptly euthanize these animals (9 CFR 309.13 (a)).

D. These instructions apply to all cattle except for veal calves.

E. Slaughter classes that are covered by this notice include:

1. Steers and heifers;
2. Bulls and cows (dairy and beef); and
3. Calves/heavy calves (calves that weigh more than 400 lbs).

NOTE: Veal calves that are non-ambulatory disabled because they are tired or cold may continue to be set apart and held for treatment under FSIS supervision as provided in 9 CFR 309.13(b). FSIS is evaluating a petition that requests that the Agency repeal this provision in the regulations. After the petition is evaluated, FSIS will determine whether updated instructions will need to be issued for the disposition of non-ambulatory disabled veal calves that are tired or cold.

IV. QUESTIONS

Refer questions regarding this notice to the Policy Development Division through [askFSIS](#) or by telephone at 1-800-233-3935. When submitting a question, use the Submit a Question tab, and enter the following information in the fields provided:

Subject Field: Enter "Disposition of Non-Ambulatory Disabled Cattle"
Question Field: Enter question with as much detail as possible
Queue Field: Select "**Slaughter**" from drop down menu
Product Field: Select "**General Inspection Policy**" from the drop down menu
Category Field: Select "**Slaughter – Livestock**" from the drop down menu
Policy Arena: Select "**Domestic**" from the drop down menu

When all fields are complete, press the **Submit** button.



Assistant Administrator
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