



United States Department of Agriculture

Food Safety and
Inspection Service

1400 Independence
Avenue, SW.
Washington, D.C.
20250

JUL 14 2017

Dena Jones
Director, Farm Animal Program
Animal Welfare Institute
900 Pennsylvania Avenue, S.E.
Washington, D.C. 20003

RE: FOIA-2017-00231
Humane Handling and slaughter

Dear Ms. Jones:

This is the final response to your Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request, dated June 5, 2017, to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS). You requested access to a copy of all noncompliance records and memorandums of interview related to the humane handling and slaughter issued by FSIS to Vermont Packinghouse LLC, (Est. M45029), during the months of March, April, and May 2017. We received your request in our Office on June 5, 2017.

The FSIS FOIA staff works with subject matter experts across the Agency to locate responsive documents. For this request, we conducted a records search in the Office of Data Integration and Food Protection. FSIS' search began on June 15, 2017. Our search includes responsive records in FSIS' control on that date.

We have located five pages that are responsive to your request. After a thorough review, we have determined that portions of these pages fall within the exemptions to the FOIA's mandatory disclosure requirements, as explained below. In particular, we have determined that portions of these documents are exempt from disclosure under (b)(4) and (b)(6) of the FOIA, 5 U.S.C. § 552, as amended. Accordingly, this request is granted in part.

Some responsive records constitute confidential commercial or financial information, which is exempt from disclosure under FOIA Exemption 4, 5 U.S.C. § 552(b)(4). Disclosure of this information may cause substantial competitive harm to the person from which this information was obtained.

Portions of the responsive records are exempt from disclosure under FOIA Exemption 6, 5 U.S.C. § 552(b)(6). Exemption 6 protects information that would constitute an unwarranted invasion of an individual's personal privacy. The types of information withheld under Exemption 6 include the names, addresses, or cell phone numbers of employees of Establishments and third parties, including, but not limited to interviewees or customers.

You may appeal this determination within 90 days from the date of this letter. Your appeal should include copies of your original request and this response, as well as a discussion of the reasons supporting your appeal. The envelope should be plainly marked to indicate that it contains a FOIA appeal. If you decide to appeal this determination, please send your appeal to:

Alfred V. Almanza, Acting Administrator
Department of Agriculture
Food Safety and Inspection Service
1400 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Room 2168, South Building
Washington, D.C. 20250-3700

Please be advised that your FOIA request, including your identity and the information made available, is releasable to the public under any subsequent FOIA requests. However, FSIS does not release your personal privacy information, such as home addresses, telephone numbers, or Social Security Numbers, all of which are protected from disclosure under FOIA Exemption 6.

If you have any questions about the way this request was handled, please contact Tony Trenkle at 202-720-2110 or via email at Anthony.Trenkle@fsis.usda.gov. If you have general questions about FSIS' FOIA procedures or regulations, please contact our FOIA Public Liaison, Mark Brook, at 202-690-1787 or via email at Mark.Brook@fsis.usda.gov.

Additionally, you may contact the Office of Government Information Services (OGIS) at the National Archives and Records Administration to inquire about the FOIA mediation services they offer. The contact information for OGIS is as follows: Office of Government Information Services, National Archives and Records Administration, 8601 Adelphi Road-OGIS, College Park, Maryland 20740-6001, e-mail at ogis@nara.gov; telephone at 202-741-5770; or facsimile at 202-741-5769.

Thank you for your interest in FSIS programs and policies.

Sincerely,

for Mark R. Brook

Arianne M. Perkins
Director, Freedom of Information Act Staff
Office of Public Affairs and Consumer Education
Food Safety and Inspection Service

Be Food Safe: CLEAN: Wash Hands and Surfaces Often SEPARATE: Separate Raw Meats from Other Foods
COOK: Cook To The Right Temperature CHILL: Refrigerate Food Promptly