



Food Safety and  
Inspection Service

January 23, 2024

Office of Field  
Operations  
Des Moines  
District Office

Electronically delivered on January 23, 2024

Neal Smith  
Federal Building  
210 Walnut Street  
Room 985  
Des Moines, IA  
50309-2123

Keaton Walker, Owner  
Responsible Transportation, LLC, Est. M45099  
22034 200<sup>th</sup> Street  
Sigourney, IA 52591  
[keaton@responsible-transportation.com](mailto:keaton@responsible-transportation.com)  
641-622-3220

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515.727.8960  
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## LETTER OF DEFERRAL

Attention: Mr. Walker

This letter serves as official notification by the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS), Des Moines District Office, of our decision to defer further action regarding the Notice of Intended Enforcement (NOIE) initiated on January 16, 2024, at, Responsible Transportation, LLC, Establishment M45099, located at 22034 200<sup>th</sup> Street, Sigourney, Iowa 52591. This letter follows verbal notification, provided by (b) (6), District Veterinary Medical Specialist, Mr. Keaton Walker, Owner, at approximately 1355 hours on January 23, 2024.

On January 17, 18, 19, 22, and 23, 2024 you provided this office, via emails, written corrective actions and preventative measures, in response to the regulatory noncompliance detailed in the NOIE. The response outlined actions adequate to address the noncompliance regarding humane handling of livestock requirements, including a plan to maintain compliance with the *Federal Meat Inspection Act* (FMIA) Title 21 of the United States Code (21 U.S.C. 603), the *Humane Methods of Slaughter Act* of 1978 (HMSA) (7 U.S.C. 1901 *et seq*), and federal regulations {Title 9 of the Code of Federal Regulations (9 CFR) Part 313}. The following documents were included, detailing action immediately implemented and further proposed at your establishment:

*Specifically:*

- NOIE Response letter, dated January 17, 2024 (11 pages)
- Animal Welfare Training Program SOP (6 pages)
  - Training logs for Animal Welfare (7 pages)
- Euthanasia of Non-ambulatory Cattle SOP (4 pages)
  - Training logs for Non-ambulatory Cattle (4 pages)
- Euthanasia Record & Denature Program of Condemned & Dead Cattle (2 pages)

- Use of Pithing Rods in Euthanasia of Cattle SOP (2 pages)
  - Training log 1 of 2 for Pithing rod (2 pages)
- Fire Arm Training SOP (5 pages)
  - Training logs for Firearm (5 pages)
- Receiving Report for Animals (1 page)
- Humane Killing of Livestock Using Firearms (20 pages)
- Iowa Code 2024, Section 724.9 Firearm Safety Training (1 page)
- 22 Caliber Rifle Maintenance Report (2 pages)

Based on your written response, you were informed verbally, that the suspension of the assignment of IPP, for slaughter operations, at your establishment is placed in deferral effective January 23, 2024.

The deferral period will remain pending verification by FSIS personnel that your proposed corrective actions and preventive measures have been effectively implemented and are adequate to maintain compliance. Establishment personnel should monitor operations to prevent violations of humane handling and slaughter from occurring in the future. It is also important for you to understand the responsibility of FSIS to initiate action when there is a failure to operate in accordance with 9 CFR Part 313 of the regulations.

During the deferral period verification activities will be conducted by IPP and results will be reported to the Des Moines District Office on a weekly basis. The decision to place the NOIE in deferral is based on the proffered actions. Any modifications to your submitted corrective actions and preventive measures made during the deferral period need to be submitted, in writing, to the Des Moines District Office for review prior to implementation by your establishment.

Please be advised that, as a federally inspected establishment, you are expected to comply with FSIS regulations and to take appropriate corrective action to prevent inhumane handling of livestock at your establishment. Your failure to comply with these requirements or to implement the measures in your action plan could result in reinstatement of the suspension of inspection at your establishment or other appropriate administrative or legal action.

If you have questions regarding this matter, please feel free to contact the Des Moines District Office at 515-727-8960 or District Veterinary Medical Specialist (b) (6).

Sincerely,

**MARK  
JOHNSON**

Digitally signed by  
MARK JOHNSON  
Date: 2024.01.23  
14:30:20 -06'00'

(for)

Mr. Jeffery Jacobsen  
District Manager  
USDA FSIS OFO  
Des Moines District Office