

July 23, 2015

Secretary Tom Vilsack
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20250

RE: Please Stop Cruelty to Downed Farm Animals

I am writing to ask your help because there must be no half measures when it comes to ending suffering and protecting human health. I urgently ask you to use your authority to protect downed cows as the downed cattle rule intends, and to extend these same crucial protections to suffering pigs by granting Farm Sanctuary's Rulemaking Petition, number 14-02.

It was good news when President Obama announced that the USDA would stop the slaughter of downed adult cattle, but it is disappointing that the action left out other animals which includes between 500,000 and 1.1 million downed pigs to be slaughtered and sent into the human food supply each year.

It is also disturbing that a loophole in the downed cattle rule allows sick and injured cattle who arrive at the slaughterhouse by truck to be turned away at the door. These animals should be humanely euthanized, yet their fate is currently unknown. What exactly happens to these sick, injured and suffering individuals.

With the loophole in the current downed cattle rule, no one knows what is happening to sick and injured cows who arrive by truck at the slaughterhouse. It is not enough to simply rule that they do not enter food system. If workers fail to get a suffering animal up, they just toss the animal aside to die in a corner with no food, no water, no veterinary care. Sometimes they dump suffering animals on piles of dead animals. It is indefensible to have piles of dead and dying cows festering like garbage near dumpsters or on the sides of the road. (It has been wisely said that, Anyone who has accustomed himself to regard the life of any living creature as worthless is in danger of arriving also at the idea of worthless human lives.)

I urgently ask you to use your authority to protect downed cows as the downed cattle rule intends, and to extend these same crucial protections to suffering pigs by granting Farm Sanctuary's Rulemaking Petition, number 14-02.

The pork industry goes to incredible lengths—even shocking downed pigs with electricity or dragging them across the slaughterhouse lot in construction machinery—to force them into the human food supply. USDA records show that downed animals have been afflicted with gangrene, malignant lymphoma, pneumonia, and other serious illnesses. And it is not just few sick animals. According to the pork industry, between 500,000 and 1.1 million pigs arrive annually at slaughterhouses too sick or injured to walk, and that number is climbing due to the use of growth-promoting drugs.

Downed animals should never be allowed to enter the human food supply. The European Food Safety Authority, the gold standard for assessing food safety, issued a report drawing the conclusion that downed animals who languish on dirty factory farm floors are more likely to have fecal matter on their hides, thereby posing a serious risk to food safety.

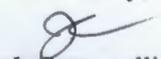
To meat producers, it all about profit. They have no incentive to end the conditions that cause animals to get sick and injured in the first place. Instead they will go to extraordinary lengths to sell sick and diseased animals for slaughter. Undercover investigations show sick and injured pigs being pushed with forklifts and shocked with electric prods to get them to the kill floor to be slaughtered and sold.

Page Two

I ask you to please use your authority to protect downed cows as the downed cattle rule intends – with no loophole, and to extend these same crucial protections to suffering pigs by granting Farm Sanctuary's Rulemaking Petition, number 14-02.

Thank you for your help. Dr. Albert Schweitzer said, "We must fight against the spirit of unconscious cruelty with which we treat the animals. Animals suffer as much as we do. True humanity does not allow us to impose such sufferings on them...Until we extend our circle of compassion to all living things, humanity will not find peace. It is man's sympathy with all creatures that first makes him truly a man."

Yours truly,


J. Capozzelli

I would like to add that even though more than 95 percent of the animals killed for food in this country are chickens, these sensitive and intelligent animals are excluded from the HMSA. This means chicken suppliers get away with torturing to death millions of animals a year in ways that would be illegal if the victims were cows or pigs (who, tragically, also suffer from much abuse because enforcement is not as strict as it should be).

There must be some ruling the USDA can make. Videos at chicken suppliers show workers violently slamming birds upside down into metal shackles, chickens cut open while still conscious and breathing, and birds scalded alive in hot water tanks (the USDA estimates as many as one million birds are scalded alive at slaughterhouses every year in the United States).

Video footage reveals:

Birds recklessly and violently shackled upside down, their fragile wings and legs breaking in the process
Severely sick, injured, and dying chickens sent through the slaughter line along with other birds intended for human consumption

Frightened birds dragged through an electrified vat of water, painfully shocked but left fully conscious

Birds having their throats sliced open while still conscious and able to feel pain

Live conscious birds scalded to death in feather-removal tanks

Birds comprise up to 98 percent of all land animals killed for food in the United States; approximately 280 chickens and 8 turkeys are slaughtered every second—a total of nine billion birds each year. (In the U.S. alone, more than seven billion chickens and 452 million egg laying hens are raised and slaughtered each year.) These numbers are so enormous as to be almost incomprehensible, leading to a detachment between the figures and our reaction to the situation. It is important to remember that these statistics are made up of individual lives, and that those lives do matter.

As a civilized country, we cannot tolerate such cruelty.

White House Agency Liaison Casework

- [Close Window](#)
- [Print This Page](#)

Case: 20161026-09513821

Case Information

Contact Name	Susanne Carpenter	Case Owner	USDA Agency Representative
Contact Phone	[REDACTED]	Status	Assigned to Agency
Contact Email	[REDACTED]	Agency Tracking ID	
Contact Address	[REDACTED]	Agency Detail	

Description Information

Who are you trying to contact? The White House and President Obama

Description Thank you for closing the loophole that allowed sick and injured cattle to be slaughtered and put into the human food supply. Your action is preventing untold cruelty and suffering for countless cows and helping to protect American consumers.

Unfortunately, hundreds of thousands of innocent pigs still face intolerable abuse when they become too ill or injured to walk, a result of the abuse they endure in massive animal agribusiness operations. Each year, thousands of animals are pushed beyond their physical limits by intensive farming practices, becoming what the industry calls "downed." These vulnerable animals are often beaten or even shocked with electric prods to force them onto slaughterhouse kill floors.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture should apply the rule you enacted for adult cattle to all livestock, including pigs, by granting USDA FSIS Petition 14-02. I urge you to direct the Secretary of Agriculture to swiftly extend the downed cattle rule to all animals who are so sick or injured that they can't even walk.

System Information

Case Origin	Contact Us	Assigned To Agency Date	10/28/2016 4:24 PM
Case Record Type	Agency Portal	Date/Time Closed	
		Assigned To Agency Age	3.7
		Age Alert	
		Priority	
		Subject	Agriculture Department

Contact Information

Contact Information

Name	Mrs. Susanne Carpenter	Email	[REDACTED]
Middle Name		Phone	[REDACTED]
Suffix			

[REDACTED]
August 15, 2015

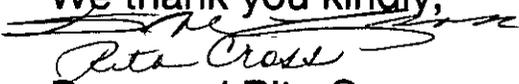
Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack, USDA
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Vilsack,

When it comes to ending suffering and protecting human health, there must be no half measures. While we were pleased when President Obama announced that the USDA would stop the slaughter of downed adult cattle, we are frustrated and disappointed that the action did not include other animals. There are between 500,000 and 1.1 million downed pigs to be slaughtered and sent into the human food supply each year. Another frustration we have is the loophole in the downed cattle rule that allows sick and injured cattle who arrive at the slaughterhouse to be turned away at the door. While these animals should be humanely euthanized, their fate is currently unknown!

We implore you to use your authority to protect downed cows as the downed cattle rule intends and extend these same crucial protections to suffering pigs by granting Farm Sanctuary's Rulemaking Petition #14-02. We should spread the protection to any suffering animal on its way to the slaughterhouse.

We thank you kindly,


Dave and Rita Cross

White House Agency Liaison Casework

- [Close Window](#)
- [Print This Page](#)

Case: 20160811-08653813**Case Information**

Contact Name	Susan Hughes	Case Owner	USDA Agency Representative
Contact Phone	(775) 287-7026	Status	Assigned to Agency
Contact Email	[REDACTED]	Agency Tracking ID	
Contact Address	[REDACTED]	Agency Detail	

Description Information

Who are you trying to contact? The White House and President Obama

Description Thank you for closing the loophole that allowed sick and injured cattle to be slaughtered and put into the human food supply. Your action is preventing untold cruelty and suffering for countless cows and helping to protect American consumers.

Unfortunately, hundreds of thousands of innocent pigs still face intolerable abuse when they become too ill or injured to walk, a result of the abuse they endure in massive animal agribusiness operations. Each year, thousands of animals are pushed beyond their physical limits by intensive farming practices, becoming what the industry calls "downed." These vulnerable animals are often beaten or even shocked with electric prods to force them onto slaughterhouse kill floors.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture should apply the rule you enacted for adult cattle to all livestock, including pigs, by granting USDA FSIS Petition 14-02. I urge you to direct the Secretary of Agriculture to swiftly extend the downed cattle rule to all animals who are so sick or injured that they can't even walk.

System Information

Case Origin	Contact Us	Assigned To Agency Date	8/11/2016 5:50 PM
Case Record Type	Agency Portal	Date/Time Closed	
		Assigned To Agency Age	3.6
		Age Alert	
		Priority	
		Subject	Agriculture Department

Contact Information**Contact Information**

Name	Ms. Susan Hughes	Email	[REDACTED]
Middle Name		Phone	[REDACTED]
Suffix			