



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Food Safety
and Inspection
Service

Washington, D.C.
20250

NOV 25 2013

Ms. Dena Jones
Farm Animal Program Manager
Animal Welfare Institute
900 Pennsylvania Avenue, SE
Washington DC 20003

Dear Ms. Jones:

The Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) has received the petition, dated May 2013, that you submitted on behalf of the Animal Welfare Institute (AWI). The petition requests that FSIS amend its humane slaughter regulations to require that all slaughter establishments adopt a systematic approach to animal welfare by preparing and maintaining a comprehensive written humane handling plan. The petition also requests other amendments that AWI believes are needed to prevent unnecessary incidents of human handling at slaughter. The requested amendments include requirements for routine testing and maintenance of stunning equipment, back-up stunning devices, and employee training in animal handling. According to the petition, such actions are needed to ensure that the slaughtering of livestock and the handling of livestock in connection with slaughter are carried out only by human methods as required under the Federal Meat Inspection Act (21 U.S.C. 601 *et seq.*) and the Humane Methods of Slaughter Act (7 U.S.C. 1901 *et seq.*)

Your request is being considered as a rulemaking petition under the Administrative Procedure Act (5 U.S.C. 553(e)), USDA's administrative regulations (7 CFR 1.28), and FSIS's regulations on petitions (9 CFR part 392). Your petition has been referred to the Office of Policy and Program Development for review, and it has been assigned petition number 13-06. As provided in 9 CFR 392.6, your petition will be made available to the public in the FSIS docket room and will be posted on the FSIS Website at: http://www.fsis.usda.gov/regulations_&_policies/Petitions/index.asp.

You may contact Mary Porretta, Petitions Manager, Issuances Staff at (202) 720-5627 if you have any questions regarding the status of your petition.

Sincerely,

Charles E. Williams
Director
Issuances Staff
Office of Policy and Program Development