



United States Department of Agriculture

Food Safety and
Inspection Service

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

AUG 03 2015

Mr. Jim Watson
Board President
International Yak Association
191 Foy's Canyon Road
Kalispell, MT 59901

Dear Mr. Watson:

The Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS or the Agency) has completed its review of the petition submitted by you on behalf of the International Yak Association (IYAK) dated September 3, 2014. The petition requests that FSIS amend 9 CFR 352.1(k) to include yak under the definition of "exotic animal." Yak is not defined as an exotic animal under current regulation, and is therefore ineligible for the USDA voluntary mark of inspection. However, because the Agency had been inspecting yak under its voluntary inspection program prior to 2014, FSIS has permitted the slaughter and processing of yak to continue under voluntary inspection while it considers the petition. After evaluating the issues raised in the petition, and the supporting data that you submitted on November 21, 2014, FSIS has decided to grant your petition.

Because our resources for regulatory development are limited, however, the Agency is unable at this time to project when it will initiate rulemaking. The Agency will continue to allow yak products to be voluntarily inspected and to bear the USDA voluntary mark of inspection pending the completion of rulemaking.

In accordance with FSIS regulations, the petition was posted on the FSIS website in November 2014. The Agency intends to post this response as well. If you have any questions regarding the status of your petition, you may contact Mary Porretta, Petitions Manager, Issuance Staff, at (202) 720-5627.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Daniel L. Engeljohn". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Daniel L. Engeljohn
Assistant Administrator
Office of Policy and Program Development