

**Secretary of Agriculture Edward W. Schafer**

U.S. Department of Agriculture

1400 Independence Ave., S.W.

Washington, DC 20250

ph: 202-720-3631

email: [AgSec@usda.gov](mailto:AgSec@usda.gov), [Edward.W.Schafer@usda.gov](mailto:Edward.W.Schafer@usda.gov)

Dear Secretary Schafer,

As you are aware, last year's undercover video from Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) revealed Westland/Hallmark Meat Co. workers who kicked, rammed, shocked and water-hosed incapacitated cows. HSUS recently released a third video that clearly portrays downer abuse during transportation, auction and slaughter.

The USDA has publicized its intent to uphold a no-downer policy for all U.S. cattle. When? I urge you to take two essential steps without postponement:

1. Accelerate regulations to close a gap in USDA's rule that lets inspectors approve downed cows for slaughter, if they pass their first inspection. With a half million infirm cows annually dragged to slaughter, a JAVMA report estimates, the USDA's present rule plainly doesn't work.
2. Expand the downer ban beyond slaughterhouses to include haulers, stockyards and auctions.

More delayed action will do nothing to safeguard animals or people.

Ultimately, the U.S. government must enact enforceable laws to ban the transport, marketing and slaughter of ALL downed animals — cows, pigs, sheep, goats, etc. Any animal too sick or injured to stand should be humanely euthanized and not left to suffer until USDA inspection.

How many more exposes of graphic animal torture will it take before the USDA sanctions humane treatment from producer to slaughter plant? No animal should be forced to stagger toward a kill floor for any reason.

Thank you,