

Farm Sanctuary Releases Statement Regarding USDA Closure of Loophole to Protect Downed Cattle

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Organization Urges Passage of Federal Legislation that Would Protect Pigs, Goats and other Livestock

Farm Sanctuary, the nation's leading farm animal protection organization, thanked the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) for closing a loophole this week in its federal regulations related to nonambulatory cattle. The organization is also urging passage of the Downed Animal and Food Safety Protection Act (H.R. 661, S. 394), which includes protection for other livestock including pigs, goats and sheep.

Julie Janovsky, director of campaigns for Farm Sanctuary stated, 'We are encouraged by the USDA's move to close the loophole that will protect downed cattle from entering the human food supply and we hope the USDA will maximize efforts to enforce this rule. However, sick and injured pigs, goats, sheep and other livestock are still dragged to their deaths at slaughterhouses nationwide. We encourage Congress to move forward with the Downed Animal and Food Safety Protection Act, providing protection to all livestock.'

Farm Sanctuary is asking concerned citizens to contact their legislators in support of two pieces of federal legislation that would officially close any loopholes in the downer ban and impose stricter punishments for violations of the downer ban.

1) The Downed Animal Protection and Food Safety Act (H.R. 661, S. 394) would ensure that "downers" will be kept out of the human food supply. This bill will remedy the shortcomings of current USDA regulations regarding downed animals by requiring the immediate, humane euthanasia of all animals who become nonambulatory.

2) The Downed Animal Enforcement Act (S. 2770), introduced by Sen. Diane Feinstein (D - California) would discourage the abuse of downed animals through stricter penalties for offenders, increasing fines for those who slaughter downed animals and allow inspectors to suspend operations at facilities that slaughter downed animals with more ease.

More information on pending federal legislation related to downed animals can be found at www.farmsanctuary.org/issues/legislation. More information on the history of Farm Sanctuary's No Downers Campaign can be found at www.nodowners.org/timeline.htm.

Farm Sanctuary is the nation's leading farm animal protection organization. Since incorporating in 1986, Farm Sanctuary has worked to expose and stop cruel practices of the "food animal" industry through research and investigations, legal and institutional reforms, public awareness projects, youth education, and direct rescue and refuge efforts. Farm Sanctuary shelters in Watkins Glen, N.Y., and Orland, Calif., provide lifelong care for hundreds of rescued animals, who have become ambassadors for farm animals everywhere by educating visitors about the realities of factory farming.

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