**Memo of Information (MOI)**

**Iowa Meat and Poultry Inspection Bureau**

This document provides instructions and guidance to veterinarians on applicable regulations regarding non-ambulatory disabled beef.

**Background on Ban of Slaughter of Non-Ambulatory Cattle and the Term “Adulterated”:**

1. The most significant concern with non-ambulatory cattle is BSE (bovine spongiform encephalopathy). People can get a version of BSE called variant Creutzfeld-Jakob disease (vCJD) when they consume food contaminated with SRM’s (specified risk material) from cattle sick from BSE. There have been four confirmed cases of BSE in the U.S. – The first in December 2003, and the most recent in April 2012.
2. On March 18, 2009, the Food Safety Inspection Service (FSIS) published a final rule, “Requirements for the Disposition of Cattle that Become Non-Ambulatory Disabled….” (Reference 74 FR 11463). The final rule requires that all non-ambulatory disabled cattle be condemned. The reasoning for this rule was that these animals present a sufficient risk of introducing BSE into the human food supply, resulting in non-ambulatory beef carcasses to be considered “unfit for human food.” In addition, typical signs of BSE often cannot be distinguished from typical signs of other diseases/conditions that affect non-ambulatory cattle.
3. The term “adulterated” has multiple definitions, one of which includes “unfit for human food.” This definition would apply to non-ambulatory disabled cattle. Federal and state laws prohibit the processing of adulterated meat products in all cases (Reference 21 USC, FMIA, CFR).

**Expectations & Requirements for Cattle Intended for Slaughter:**

1. The animal must be ambulatory at the time it is stunned and killed. **Non-ambulatory disabled livestock are livestock that cannot rise from a recumbent position and/or that cannot walk on their own**, including, but not limited to, those with broken appendages, severed tendons or ligaments, nerve paralysis, fractured vertebral column, or metabolic conditions – (9CFR 309.2).
2. Cattle that are unable to rise and walk (defined as non-ambulatory) at the time of stunning are considered unfit for human consumption (definition of adulterated) and may NOT be processed at any State of Iowa licensed and inspected establishment.Although we understand the significant frustration with this rule, it is a federal regulation and must be followed, and will be verified by inspection staff.

We all have the goal of production of a safe and wholesome product for the public, and we would appreciate your cooperation in the matter outlined above. Thank you!

You may direct any questions on this topic to Iowa Meat & Poultry Inspection Acting Bureau Chief, Dr. Kristyn White (515-281-3338, [Kristyn](mailto:Kristyn).White@fsis.usda.gov).