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May 27, 2020

The Honorable Sonny Perdue
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Jamie L. Whitten Building
1400 Independence Ave. SW
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Perdue:

I received your May 19 letter (attached) in response to my May 5 (attached) regarding my concern that the meat supply chain effects brought by COVID-19 may lead to the use of particularly inhumane methods of animal depopulation. While hardly surprised that the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) supports our livestock producers and encourages humane depopulation methods, you provided no response to my questions.

Specifically, what is the USDA's position on the use of the specific inhumane methods, ventilation shutdown with heat and water-based foam? While the reply stated that the USDA intends to use the American Veterinarian Medical Association (AVMA) Guidelines for the Depopulation of Animals, these guidelines do not specifically approve or disapprove of certain depopulation methods and vary depending on the categorization of the event.

Can the USDA ensure that under no circumstances will producers be utilizing ventilation shutdown with heat and using water-based foam depopulation methods only when all other options have been exhausted?

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lloyd Doggett". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Lloyd Doggett