



Animal Welfare Institute

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September 18, 2012

The Honorable Nikolai Fyodorov
Ministry of Agriculture of the Russian Federation
1/11 Orlikov Pereulok
Moscow 107139
Russian Federation

Dear Dr. Fyodorov:

I write on behalf of the Animal Welfare Institute (“AWI”), a non-profit, animal welfare organization based in the United States, to urge you to immediately suspend imports of cattle to the Russian Federation from the United States by sea.

In early August, a shipment of pregnant dairy cattle from the United States arrived in Russia in such poor condition that more than one thousand animals either died during the journey or collapsed after arrival and had to be euthanized by veterinarians. Six weeks following the incident the Veterinary Services program of the U.S. Department of Agriculture has yet to provide any information as to the cause of the tragedy or what steps are being taken to prevent a similar occurrence in the future.

AWI became aware in 2010 that large numbers of U.S. breeding beef and dairy cattle would be exported over the coming years to Europe and Asia, and that the mode of transport for most of the animals would be ship. In early 2011 AWI, along with the World Society for the Protection of Animals, petitioned the U.S. Department of Agriculture Veterinary Services to take action to ensure the health and welfare of the animals to be exported. We asked specifically that the internationally-recognized animal “fitness to travel” requirements of the World Organization for Animal Health (“OIE”) be adopted. To date, AWI has received no official response to its petition.

We fear further animal suffering and loss of life if strong action is not taken, and therefore encourage the Russian Federation to immediately suspend all imports of cattle by sea from the United States.

We appreciate your nation’s concern for the health and well-being of animals subjected to international trade, and thank you in advance for your kind consideration of this request.

Very truly yours,

Cathy Liss
President