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January 14, 2005

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To Whom It May Concern:

I am a veterinarian who graduated from the UC Davis School of Veterinary Medicine in 1998. In addition to my experience as a small animal practitioner, I spent 3 years on the Board of Directors of Humane Society Silicon Valley. During this time I also served as Chair for the Animal Policies and Positions Committee of the Humane Society.

After reviewing video footage of the Agriprocessors, Inc. kosher slaughterhouse kill floor, it is my impression that animals are routinely made to suffer far more than necessary to achieve the required result. It is my opinion that the apparently standard procedure of removing a section of the cow's trachea and surrounding muscle structures after the carotid arteries have been severed is totally unnecessary. I do not believe that removing a section of trachea causes the animals to reach a state of unconsciousness significantly sooner than the severing of the carotid arteries alone. Additionally, the removal of large sections of trachea and muscle in fully conscious animals certainly causes severe pain and suffering and is, in my opinion, inhumane. Another problem I observed in a number of incidents at the plant is that of fully conscious animals slipping and sliding on the blood-soaked kill floor in an attempt to right themselves. I also noted multiple incidents where cows were chain hoisted by a single limb despite being fully conscious. A couple of incidents also show cows being shocked with an electric prod while already in the restraining device. Since a restrained cow cannot move after being prodded, the shock can only lead to pain which the animal can do nothing about. Other footage revealed a turkey which had fallen from a conveyor belt and was left to struggle and suffer on the floor. Chickens were also seen being dumped onto a conveyor belt and having their feet (and in one incident, the head) caught between the roller and the belt. Overall I believe that the dissection and removal of large sections of trachea and surrounding muscle in fully conscious cows is inhumane and unnecessary. Hoisting and suspending conscious cows by one limb is painful, inhumane, and could be prevented simply by giving animals enough time to reach unconsciousness first. The equipment used to place the chickens on the conveyor belt clearly needs to be modified to prevent the inhumane trapping of head and limbs in the device.

Overall, my impression is that Agriprocessors, Inc. is trying to process more animals than can be done in a humane manner given their existing facilities, equipment, and staff. Cows