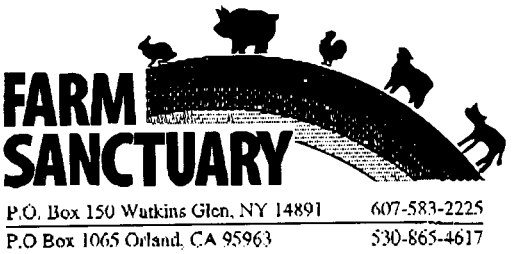

March 26, 2003

Mr. Barry Carpenter
Deputy Administrator
Livestock and Seed Program
Agriculture Marketing Service, USDA
South Building, Room 2029
1400 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Mr. Carpenter,

Farm Sanctuary is submitting these comments in response to the December 20, 2002 Notice published by the Livestock and Seed Program regarding Standards for Livestock and Meat Marketing Claims. By this letter, we request an extension of the comment period, and we encourage the Department to undertake a thorough and extensive analysis of this increasingly important topic.

In light of numerous reports about food born illnesses, emerging pathogens, environmental degradation, animal suffering, and other hazards associated with common industrialized agricultural practices, people are increasingly concerned about the source of their food. The demand for healthful food that is produced under humane and environmentally sustainable conditions is on the rise, and consumers are coming to depend on labels and marketing claims in making their food choices.

We commend you for addressing this emerging area of concern, and we encourage you to invest the time, energy, and resources warranted to formulate meaningful standards which are transparent and consistent with consumer expectations.

Thank you for working on this, and thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration.

Sincerely,

Gene Bauston, President
Farm Sanctuary, Inc.