



Statement to Media

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California Cattlemen's Association Statement on Reported Animal Abuse at Hallmark/Westland Meat Packing Co.

In response to the animal abuse investigation that was reported in the *Washington Post* and other media outlets this week that reported severe animal cruelty at the Hallmark Meat Packing in Chino, Calif., California Cattlemen's Association (CCA) President Bruce Hafenfeld, Weldon, released this statement:

"I and the members of the California Cattlemen's Association are deeply concerned by the video footage taken at Hallmark Meat Packing plant that was released earlier this week. As producers of food for our nation and providers of care to cattle throughout the state, we strongly oppose the mistreatment of animals and, under no circumstances, condone the type of cruelty displayed.

The California beef cattle industry has been proactive in supporting a ban on processing downer cattle, even prior to the introduction of BSE to the United States. CCA policy explicitly opposes the introduction of any non-ambulatory animals into the human food supply. Our industry has strongly supported state and federal law enforcing these policies that exist for both animal and human protection.

CCA represents beef producers who hold themselves to the highest standards of animal care, and while the animals displayed in the investigation are culled dairy cows, the mistreatment of any cattle should not be tolerated. We support a full investigation of this incident to ensure that those involved are held responsible.

At CCA, we strive to educate our producers on the importance of the proper handling and welfare of animals at all times, from the ranch to the consumer. Through our beef quality assurance programs we educate and certify producers around the state to maintain the highest practices for animal care and beef quality. These programs ensure cattle are humanely treated and consumers have access to the safest beef products in the world."