

**U.S. DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE DISTRICT OF NEW MEXICO**

Valley Meat Company, LLC

Plaintiff,

v.

TOM VILSACK, Secretary  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
1400 Independence Ave., SW  
Washington, DC 20250

AL ALMANZA, Administrator,  
Food Safety and Inspection Service  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
1400 Independence Ave., SW, Room 331-E  
Washington, DC 20250

Defendants.

12-CV-1083-JCG-CG

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**AFFIDAVIT OF WILLIAM AND JAN WOOD IN SUPPORT OF  
MOTION TO INTERVENE**

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STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA     )  
  ) ss.  
COUNTY OF BUTTE            )

We, William ("Bill") and Jan Wood, being duly sworn upon oath hereby depose and state as follows:

1. We are over the age of 18 years, and have personal knowledge of the facts contained herein.
2. Our address is 13340 Hope Road, Newell, South Dakota 57760.
3. We have been in the horse industry throughout our lives and raised

registered horses for many years for our own use and for sale. Bill has been a farrier, full time, for over 15 years. We are in the cattle business as well, and use our horses to handle our cattle and to day work for others to handle their livestock

4. The closing of the slaughter plants in the U.S. dramatically changed our horse breeding operation when it became very difficult to market the horses we had successfully marketed in the preceding years. Our customers no longer had a way to sell an unwanted horse for enough money to be able to replace that horse with a young prospect. Crippled, non-rideable horses were no longer of value, so horse people couldn't rotate horses out of their program in order to replace them.
5. Bill has lost many shoeing customers due to the loss of monetary value of the horses they owned. Many of his customers were trainers who based a great deal of their livelihood on the marketability of the horses they trained/owned.
6. Equine slaughter is regulated very closely under government rules of handling, just as other species are. The process is done as quickly and efficiently as is humanly possible, with minimal suffering on the animal's part.
7. Horse meat is just as safe as any other meat product, plus is unable to carry many of the diseases that other species carry (BSE and FMD are two). The rules on drug withholding in all species is effective, therefore horse meat is no more likely to contain drug residue than any other species.
8. The processing of horses will benefit the financial integrity of many related industries and cause no more harm, environmentally or otherwise, than any other species. The processing of horses and the plants thereof are closely monitored as to how they dispose of waste and water.
9. We, as people in the horse industry, will be further burdened with the devalued horses that we are no longer able to sell. The opening of horse processing facilities is crucial for the recovery of the horse industry as a whole. The slaughter market in horses and other livestock sets the tone for the market in general.

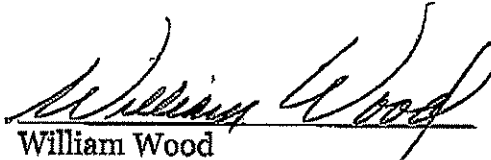
10. The delay of the plant openings would cause hardship to us as producers and owners, due to increased cost of maintaining horses that cannot be sold. Further delays caused by the redundant NEPA process would cause further suffering to horses that are out of or soon to be out of feed.
11. NEPA is not required for any other species that is slaughtered for human consumption in the U.S. and should not be required for horse processing either. The regulations in place concerning environmental hazards of processing are adequate for all species.
12. The continuing lack of jobs in the community will further burden a small, rural area that is in desperate need of jobs. The opening of the plant would put many out of work people back in the work force, thereby stimulating the economy of the whole region.
13. Excess horse numbers in the drought stricken plains region will be documented on a continuing basis by news stories of horses starving or being seized due to lack of care. Counties will be burdened with the care of those horses, as well as veterinarians and caring individuals who put in their time to help them. The owners, often due to financial restrictions, were unable to feed the horses, and then are burdened with legal costs they cannot manage.
14. The economic impact of the closed plants will continue to increase as time passes, as more and more horses are unwanted and associated industries close due to lack of revenue.
15. In our opinion, there is no negative impact of a slaughter facility, horse or otherwise, in a community. The jobs created are definitely positive.
16. Environmental benefits could include fertilizer made from the rich waste that is created by a processing plant. On a broader scope, the overgrazing of pastures is a huge environmental concern and with excess horses needing to graze, the devastation of pastures and fields, both by the killing of good species of grass and the ensuing weeds, and the runoff and erosion from denuded pastures, is a huge environmental danger to the soil and waterways.
17. The numerous reasons referenced above is why we wish to join in this litigation.

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FURTHER AFFIANT SAYETH NAUGHT.

DATED this 19th day of February, 2013.

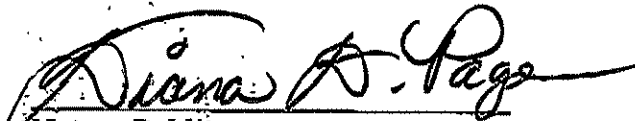
  
William Wood

  
Jan Wood

STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA     )  
  ) ss.  
COUNTY OF BUTTE            )

The foregoing instrument was subscribed and sworn under oath before me by William Wood and Jan Wood, this 19th day of February, 2013.

Witness my hand and official seal.



Notary Public  
My Commission Exp: DIANA D. PAGE  
My Commission Expires Jan. 10, 2014