



PEOPLE FOR
THE ETHICAL
TREATMENT
OF ANIMALS

September 19, 2023

The Honorable Matthew B. Gross
Marshall City Attorney

Dear Mr. Gross:

I'm writing to request that your office (and a law-enforcement agency, as necessary) investigate and file applicable criminal charges against the individuals responsible for the suffering of more than 1,100 turkeys who died while being hauled in temperatures as low as minus 6 degrees to Turkey Valley Farms, located at 112 S. 6th St.—part of a years-long string of horrors documented at the operation. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) documented the incidents in reports that the agency recently made available to the public. (See the attached table.)

According to the reports, over three days in January 2023, at least 1,181 turkeys died while being hauled up to 600 miles—from factory farms as far away as Missouri—through sleet and snow. Many of these birds were unwanted hens “with little to no feathers,” and survivors were wounded, bleeding, and “shivering.” Up to 193 more turkeys apparently suffered from hypothermia before they were slaughtered.

In September and October 2022, severely crowded, caged turkeys were found standing on top of each other on at least seven trailers, which evidently caused some to suffocate. In February 2022, a worker “slammed” a hen against shackles, which “made a loud crashing sound.” The worker then “hit the turkey against the shackles two more times.” Live turkeys were plunged into scalding-hot water—as they raised their heads, flapped their wings, blinked their eyes, and gasped for breath—in March 2023, January 2023, October 2022, and July 2021.

This conduct may violate Minn. Stat. § 343.21. *Please note that FSIS' action carries no criminal or civil penalties and does not preempt criminal liability under state law for acts of cruelty to animals.* Given that the FSIS hasn't initiated a criminal prosecution of a licensed slaughterhouse for inhumane handling since *at least 2007*, charges under state law are these victims' only chance at a measure of justice.

I can be reached at DanielP@peta.org. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Daniel Paden
Vice President of Evidence Analysis

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