



PEOPLE FOR  
THE ETHICAL  
TREATMENT  
OF ANIMALS

February 16, 2021

To: Dennis Organ, President and CEO, Smithfield Foods  
Stewart Leeth, Vice President and Chief Sustainability Officer,  
Smithfield Foods

From: Colin Henstock, Assistant Manager of Investigations, PETA

Via e-mail: [dorgan@smithfield.com](mailto:dorgan@smithfield.com); [sleeth@smithfield.com](mailto:sleeth@smithfield.com)

**Re: Pigs Allegedly Freezing to Death at Smithfield Fresh Meats Corp. in Crete**

Dear Messrs. Organ and Leeth:

**Your attention is urgently requested.** This letter concerns a recent report submitted to PETA's headquarters by an individual who claims to have knowledge of pigs suffering from severe frostbite and freezing to death at Smithfield Fresh Meats Corp. (est. M717CR + P717CR) in Crete, Nebraska.

We've been told that upon arriving at the plant, pigs are being left on transport trucks for hours. The insulating panels on the vehicles are reportedly ineffective in the current cold, and the animals evidently suffer from extreme frostbite and even freeze to death as a result. Once unloaded, they're then allegedly left in unheated barns before slaughter.

These allegations, if true, could constitute violations of Nebraska law, which prohibits "intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly abandon[ing] or cruelly neglect[ing] a livestock animal."<sup>1</sup> Clearly, the alleged circumstances do not conform with the commonly accepted practices of commercial livestock operations, which are otherwise exempt from prosecution.

Given the extreme cold forecast for Crete this week, we hope to receive your prompt assurance that Smithfield Foods will immediately investigate how long pigs are being held on trailers and in barns at the facility and take all necessary steps to prevent them from suffering from frostbite and dying during or following transport to this facility. I can be reached at [ColinH@peta.org](mailto:ColinH@peta.org). Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Colin Henstock  
Assistant Manager of Investigations

cc: Quita Bowman Blackwell, D.V.M., National Humane Handling  
Enforcement Coordinator, OFO, FSIS, USDA

Washington, D.C.  
1536 16th St. N.W.  
Washington, DC 20036  
202-483-PETA

Los Angeles  
2154 W. Sunset Blvd.  
Los Angeles, CA 90026  
323-644-PETA

Norfolk  
501 Front St.  
Norfolk, VA 23510  
757-622-PETA

Berkeley  
2855 Telegraph Ave.  
Ste. 301  
Berkeley, CA 94705  
510-763-PETA

[Info@peta.org](mailto:Info@peta.org)  
[PETA.org](http://PETA.org)

Affiliates:

- PETA Asia
- PETA India
- PETA France
- PETA Australia
- PETA Germany
- PETA Netherlands
- PETA Foundation (U.K.)

<sup>1</sup>Nebraska Revised Statute § 54-903 <https://nebraskalegislature.gov/laws/statutes.php?statute=54-903> (Last accessed on Feb. 16, 2021).