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- PETA Netherlands
- PETA Foundation (U.K.)

November 23, 2015

Elizabeth Goldentyer, D.V.M.
Director, Animal Welfare Operations
USDA/APHIS/AC Eastern Region

Via e-mail: aceast@aphis.usda.gov

Dear Dr. Goldentyer,

I am writing on behalf of PETA to request that the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) promptly investigate Kathleen Futrell, dba "Waccatee Zoo" (license no. 56-C-0230), concerning the death of Chico the chimpanzee and associated apparent violations of the Animal Welfare Act (AWA).

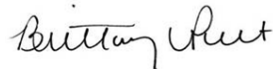
An eyewitness reported to PETA that on November 1, a Waccatee zookeeper who was feeding fries to Chico stated that the chimpanzee was "not feeling well." On November 17, another eyewitness reported that a [sign](#) was posted on Chico's former enclosure stating that he died on November 3. Zoo staff told the witness that a necropsy revealed that Chico had congenital heart disease, *which the zoo was not aware of*, in apparent violation of the AWA requirement to use "appropriate methods to prevent, control, diagnose, and treat diseases." 9 C.F.R. § 2.40(b)(2).

Cardiovascular disease is widely known to be a chronic issue for captive male chimpanzees,¹ and the alarming fact that Waccatee Zoo failed to screen for this common but serious condition, let alone provide appropriate treatment, raises grave concerns about the continuing lack of adequate veterinary care at this facility. Furthermore, wild chimpanzees roam over several kilometers a day and feed on fruit with [low sugar content](#)—so Chico's sedentary lifestyle, coupled with unhealthy food such as fries, likely exacerbated his condition. Early diagnosis and treatment of his congenital heart disease could have made this condition manageable and might even have prevented his untimely death.

Please investigate the conditions surrounding Chico's death and hold all responsible parties fully accountable for any and all violations of the AWA that you uncover, including but not limited to failure to notify a veterinarian of Chico's condition and failure to adequately assess the health and well-being of animals at the Waccatee Zoo, pursuant to 9 C.F.R. § 2.40.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter. Please inform me of the complaint number that your agency assigns to this correspondence.

Very truly yours,



Brittany Peet
Deputy Director, Captive Animal Law Enforcement

¹N. Varki *et al.* "Heart Disease Is Common in Humans and Chimpanzees, but Is Caused by Different Pathological Processes." *Evolutionary Applications* 2:1, 101–12, 2009.