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**For Immediate Release**

**Farm Bureau Replies to Supreme Court Ruling on Livestock Standards**

**Trenton, NJ (July 30, 2008)** -- New Jersey Farm Bureau believes today's Supreme Court ruling on humane livestock standards is an endorsement of the Department of Agriculture's authority and expertise in establishing these guidelines. The court's opinion was in response to the challenge by humane organizations and individuals to the NJDA regulations governing the raising, keeping and marketing of domestic livestock.

"The Supreme Court today upheld the authority of the Department to define those practices that are to be considered humane," said Farm Bureau president Richard Nieuwenhuis. "Despite this challenge to those rules, the court validated the Department's research and findings with only one exception (tail docking)."

"Despite the appellants' challenge to routine livestock handling practices such as beak trimming, toe trimming, and others, the court supports the legitimacy of these practices, said Nieuwenhuis. "We recognize, however, that the court has directed the NJDA to better define who is knowledgeable to conduct these practices."

In upholding the Department's authority to define humane standards for livestock, the court gave specific directions to the agency in how to properly address the issues raised by the litigation. In part, the court said: "The record demonstrates that the Department took seriously its charge to consider all aspects of the questions about the welfare of domestic livestock." The court further stated: "Regardless of one's personal view of the overall regulating scheme or domestic livestock in general, the regulations as a whole are consistent with the meaning of the term 'humane'".

Nieuwenhuis said in summary: "We believe in the professionalism and expertise of the Department of Agriculture, the public should also be confident in its ability to address the remaining concerns of the court."

The New Jersey Farm Bureau is a non-profit member organization of 14,000+ farmers and farm-related individuals within the Garden State. It is the only organization solely dedicated to representing the grass- roots interests and directives of its members in educating all levels of government and the public on the farm community's policies and positions. The Farm Bureau also takes a lead in seeking out initiatives, activities and ventures to enhance the profitability of producer members and ensure the viability of agriculture in New Jersey -- *the Garden State for Good Reason -- our farms.*

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