

Georgia Livestock Dealer Suspended

Washington (December 26, 2000) - On November 11, 2000, the U.S. Department of Agriculture suspended the livestock dealer operations of John Carl Stephens, Irwinville, Georgia, operating as Carl Stephens (Stephens), and ordered him to cease and desist from violating the Packers and Stockyards Act (Act).

Stephens was also ordered to cease and desist from: (1) issuing insufficient funds checks in payment for livestock purchases; (2) failing to pay the full purchase price for livestock purchases; (3) failing to pay, when due, the full purchase price for livestock purchases.

The default decision was issued on November 6, 2000, after Stephens failed to file an answer to an administrative complaint that was filed on July 19, 2000. Failure to file an answer constituted an admission of the allegations stated in the complaint. The cease and desist order became effective on November 11, 2000.

Stephens is suspended as a registrant under the Act for a period of five (5) years. However, a supplemental order may be issued terminating the suspension after 90 days, if Stephens demonstrates that all livestock sellers or shippers identified in the complaint have been paid in full. The order may be modified after 90 days, if Stephens applies to the Packers and Stockyards Programs for permission to become a salaried employee of another registrant or packer, and if circumstances warrant that modification.

The Act is a fair trade practice and payment protection law that promotes a fair and competitive marketing environment for livestock, meat, and poultry.

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Leah Akbar (202) 720-4998
Leah_L.Akbar@usda.gov