

Decision Reached In GIPSA's Case Against Michael Claude Edwards

WASHINGTON, June 23, 2003 -P On May 29, 2003, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration reached a consent decision with Michael Claude Edwards (Edwards) of Lambsburg, Va. Edwards was alleged to have been operating as a dealer buying and selling livestock in commerce, and as a market agency buying livestock on a commission basis (order buyer), in violation of the bonding requirements of the Packers and Stockyards Act (P&S Act).

The complaint alleged that the \$10,000 surety bond Edwards maintained to secure the performance of his livestock obligations under the P&S Act was terminated on May 3, 2000, and that Edwards failed to replace the bond or obtain a bond equivalent. GIPSA informed Edwards that he needed to obtain a \$10,000 bond or its equivalent before continuing his livestock operations. The complaint alleged that despite this notice Edwards continued to engage in the business of a dealer and a market agency without maintaining an adequate bond or its equivalent.

Edwards was assessed a civil penalty of \$1,000.00. The provisions of this order became effective on the sixth day after service of this order.

Edwards has since obtained the necessary bond in the amount of \$10,000 required to continue his livestock operations under the P&S Act.

The P&S Act is a fair trade practice and payment protection law that promotes fair and competitive marketing environments for the livestock, meat, and poultry industries.

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