

January 14, 2009

Jihad Douglas, President  
Aviagen Turkeys, Inc.  
31186 Midland Trail E.  
Lewisburg, WV 24901

**1 page via e-mail and fax: [jdouglas@aviagen.com](mailto:jdouglas@aviagen.com); 304-793-2684**

Dear Mr. Douglas:

I regret to inform you that PETA's office has received another call from a whistleblower inside Aviagen making disturbing allegations.

We are told that, contrary to your public statement below, Keith Heaton, Tim Wagner, and Jeff Rutherford—who were documented torturing, killing, and abusing turkeys—are still working at your farms and handling live turkeys as part of Aviagen's vaccination/service crew.

On November 24, 2008, Aviagen released the following public statement:  
"Aviagen Turkeys has conducted an internal investigation as a result of alleged animal welfare violations. Based on our findings, **we have terminated the employment of all the individuals in violation of our animal welfare policies**, including the supervisor. **We have also outlined a series of actions that are being implemented to support and improve our existing welfare guidelines helping ensure violations do not occur in future**" [*emphasis added*].

As you know, on November 18, 2008, my colleagues and I came to Lewisburg and presented Bob Edson, Aviagen's vice president, and Aviagen director Sandi Hofmann with the findings of our undercover investigation at your Lewisburg-area farms, including a copy of the criminal complaint that we filed with law enforcement officials later that day. During that meeting, Hofmann wrote down the names of the Aviagen employees—including *Heaton, Wagner, and Rutherford*—responsible for each incident described in the complaint in which turkeys were tortured, abused, neglected, and/or killed.

As you well know, between them, these men punched and "kicked the fuck" out of turkeys, stomped on a turkey's head, and killed another for fun only after repeatedly trying to break her neck and leaving her to suffer so that, in the worker's words, the turkey would "know that death is on the way." You have publicly declared that violating your animal welfare policies is grounds for dismissal—if the conduct of these workers does not constitute a violation of policy, one wonders what would violate it.

In our November 18 meeting, Mr. Edson conceded that Aviagen had no training program in place on proper killing methods. He even stated that employees who

killed turkeys were expected to learn how to do so by watching their supervisor (who may not have been trained either). As you know, Edson publicly declared that Aviagen would "add to ... policies, as well as our procedures, training and monitoring ... to help ensure these acts do not occur in the future." We were told that Edson also promised that he would hold classes for employees in which he would demonstrate proper methods of handling and killing turkeys. However, we have now been told that—two months later—Edson has yet to hold any classes or offer employees any such instruction. We must ask you this: What "series of actions" has Aviagen taken to prevent further acts of cruelty to animals on its farms?

I look forward to hearing from you soon. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Daphna Nachminovitch". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "D" and a stylized "N".

Daphna Nachminovitch, Vice President  
Cruelty Investigations Department

cc: Dr. Bob Edson, Vice President of Operations, Aviagen Turkeys, Inc.  
Sandi Hofmann, Director, Aviagen Turkeys, Inc.  
Matt Prescott, Director of Corporate Affairs, PETA