

office of  
CHIEF RABBI

To the members of Parliament of the Netherlands,

25 February 2011

Lecturi salutant,

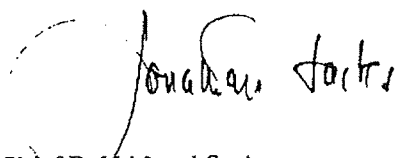
It is my experience, that the Dutch Government has only the highest regard for all religious denominations, in the best tradition of Dutch tolerance. Now, its resolve is to be tested by a proposal to ban the Jewish humane method of slaughter of animals for food, also known as Shechita. If proponents of the ban are successful, Holland would be the first European nation to outlaw shechita since the 1930's.

Shechita is permissible under European law and to ban it under the pretext of animal welfare is misguided. In fact, there is a significant body of scientific opinion to demonstrate that the Shechita method is humane and conforms with all the legal and ethical requirements for humane animal slaughter for food. The method achieves what other slaughter methods attempt, namely an integral immediate and irreversible stun until death supervenes. There is no reliable scientific evidence to the contrary.

The Jewish faith has always taken animal welfare extremely seriously, and the Jewish community considers itself to be an example of best practice in this area.

I respectfully call on you, respected member of parliament, and on the Dutch Government, to prevent this measure from being passed.

Yours sincerely,



Chief Rabbi Lord Sacks

Chief Rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregations of the Commonwealth  
President of the Conference of European Rabbis

