

## **Letter to the US Chain Restaurant Industry: Prohibit the routine use of antibiotics in your meat supply**

September 15, 2015

Dear CEOs of Top Restaurant Chains,

On behalf of millions of concerned citizens, we urge you to commit to serving meat and poultry in your restaurants that is raised without the routine use of antibiotics. Medical experts tell us that we need to significantly reduce our use of antibiotics, including in animal agriculture, in order to address the growing health threat from antibiotic-resistant bacterial infections.

American consumers are deeply concerned about this issue. According to a 2012 Consumer Reports survey, a majority of consumers want meat raised without antibiotics and are willing to pay more for it. Mainstream food companies like Chick-fil-A, Panera Bread and Chipotle are responding and demonstrating that it is economically viable to greatly reduce or eliminate antibiotic use, particularly in poultry production.

80% of all antibiotics in the US are currently sold for use by livestock producers who routinely administer these drugs in order to promote faster growth and prevent disease in living conditions that are often crowded and unsanitary. The overuse and misuse of these critical drugs enables some of the bacteria to become resistant, proliferate and spread.

Antibiotics should only be used for treating animals when indicated by a genuine therapeutic need, such as a diagnosed illness or to stop a documented outbreak of disease. They should never be administered routinely for purposes such as growth promotion or disease prevention.

Yet this dangerous practice continues, even as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) declare antibiotic resistance to be among the top five health threats facing our nation, and health experts including the World Health Organization, American Medical Association and American Academy of Pediatrics warn that feeding low doses of antibiotics to healthy animals contributes to the rise of antibiotic-resistant bacteria.

Leadership from the US Chain Restaurant Industry is urgently needed. If you haven't done so already, we urge you to take the following actions:

1. Publicly adopt an antibiotics stewardship policy that prohibits the use of antibiotics or prohibits the routine use of medically important antibiotics for growth promotion or disease prevention and allows use of these drugs only to treat sick animals or for non-routine disease control. Perdue Farms, for example, recently announced it has already implemented such a standard.
2. Let your suppliers know that you expect poultry and other meats sold in your restaurants to meet this standard.

While we will continue to push lawmakers and regulatory agencies to adopt stronger policies, we believe that your industry can use its significant buying power to help stem this public health crisis by developing strong policies to reduce or eliminate antibiotic use in your meat and poultry supply chains.

Sincerely,

Academy of Integrative Health & Medicine  
AFGE Local 3354  
Albert Einstein College of Medicine  
AllergyKids Foundation  
Alliance for Prudent Use of Antibiotics  
American Federation of Government Employees  
American Grassfed Association  
Antibiotic Resistance Action Center  
Breast Cancer Fund  
Cal PIRG  
California Church IMPACT  
Catholic Rural Life  
Center for Biological Diversity  
Center for Environmental Health  
Center for Family Farm Development, Inc.  
Center for Food Safety  
Center for Science in the Public Interest  
Center on Race, Poverty & the Environment  
Central Co-op  
Chef Ann Foundation  
Clean Water Action Council of NE WI  
Community Food and Justice Coalition  
Consumers Union  
CoPIRG  
Dignity Health  
Dr. Yolanda Whyte Pediatrics  
Earth Day Coalition  
Ecology Center  
Environmental Working Group  
familyfarmed  
Farm Forward  
Farm Sanctuary  
Farmworker Association of Florida  
Food & Water Watch  
Food Animal Concerns Trust  
Food Babe  
Food Chain Workers Alliance  
Food Sleuth, LLC  
Fresh Advantage LLC  
Friends of the Earth  
Government Accountability Project  
Grassroots Environmental Education  
Green Chicago Restaurant Coalition  
Health Care Without Harm  
Healthy Food Action  
Hoosier Environmental Council  
IFOAM-Organics International

Illinois Citizens for Clean Air & Water  
Institute of Neurotoxicology and Neurological Disorders  
Institute for a Sustainable Future  
Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy  
Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future  
Keep Antibiotics Working  
Kewaunee CARES  
Land Loss Prevention Project  
Land Stewardship Project  
League of United Latin American Citizens  
Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association  
Maryland PIRG  
MASSPIRG  
Midwest Environmental Justice Organization  
MomsRising.org  
MRSA Survivors Network  
National Center for Health Research  
National Consumers League  
National Latino Farmers & Ranchers Trade Association  
National Physicians Alliance  
Natural Resources Defense Council  
Nebraska Sustainable Agriculture Society  
NMPIRG  
NOFA Interstate  
Northeast Sustainable Ag. Working Group  
Oregon Physicians for Social Responsibility  
Oregon State PIRG  
Organic Consumers Association  
Pesticide Action Network  
Physicians for Social Responsibility, SF Bay Area Chapter  
Public Health Alliance  
Real Food Challenge  
Roots of Change  
RRBG Farms LLC  
Rural Coalition  
Rural Development Leadership Network  
School Food FOCUS  
Science and Environmental Health Network  
Slow Food California  
Slow Food Nebraska  
Slow Food USA  
Socially Responsible Agricultural Project  
Society for Obesity Awareness & Prevention  
Society of Infectious Disease Pharmacists  
Southwest Environmental Center  
STOP Foodborne Illness  
The Black Goat

The Cornucopia Institute  
The Humane Society of the US, WI Agriculture Advisory Council  
The Rosenthal Group, Inc.  
U.S. PIRG  
U.S. Right to Know  
University of Illinois  
University of Illinois at Chicago  
UIC School of Public Health  
WashPIRG  
Waterkeeper Alliance  
Wellness Warrior  
Western Nebraska Resources Council  
Wisconsin Nurses Association  
Women, Food and Agriculture Network  
World Farmers