



PEW COMMISSION ON
INDUSTRIAL FARM
ANIMAL PRODUCTION

January 15, 2010

Mr. Andrew Giesen, President
Federation of Animal Science Societies
2441 Village Green Place
Champaign, Illinois 61822

Dear Mr. Giesen:

After reviewing 30 years of scientific data, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the World Health Organization, the American Medical Association, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the American Nurses Association, the American Public Health Association, the European Union and the members of the Pew Commission on Industrial Farm Animal Production (Commission) have all concluded that we must end the non-therapeutic use of antibiotics in industrial farming operations in order to protect human health.

As the chairman and vice chairman of the Commission during its two and a half year duration, we feel compelled to bring this fact to your attention, as well as correct the inaccurate statements from the Federation of Animal Science Societies' January 6 news release about the Commission's 2008 report "Putting Meat on the Table: Industrial Farm Animal Production in America."

First, there is an established library of scientific studies available on the human health impacts of routine antibiotic use in food animals. In fact, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has stated that the matter of routine antibiotic use in food animals and its contribution to antibiotic resistance in humans is a matter of "settled science." We are enclosing a partial bibliography of the studies that have been conducted over the last three decades outlining the link between routine antibiotic use in food animal production and the impact on human health. The list includes 51 separate peer-reviewed scientific studies that detail this link.

Next, the Commission recognized the fact that animals will likely continue to be raised in large numbers. We pointed to nations like Denmark, which have found ways to raise swine in big, intensive operations without relying on the non-therapeutic use of antibiotics, the use of gestation crates or on liquid waste management systems. The Commission did not support an end to all industrial farming operations, however, we believe the current systems in the United States are not sustainable and require significant improvement.

The Commission was established to develop consensus recommendations to address the problem of concentrated animal feeding operations, or industrial farms, in the areas of public health, environmental quality, animal welfare and rural communities. It was comprised of members from diverse professional backgrounds, experiences, and knowledge, including medicine, veterinary medicine, production agriculture, the food service industry, public health, rural sociology, state and federal policy, religion, nutrition, and ethics. Former United States Department of Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman was a member.

Contrary to your assertions, we took an unbiased approach with respect to technical reports and academic studies. We commissioned eight, separate technical, peer-reviewed reports based on the official process used by the National Academy of Sciences. The Commission consulted a broad range of academic

experts on the issues and solicited input from representatives of the industrial food animal industry. We approached academic experts initially recommended by industry, however the industry then discouraged those same experts from participating in the Commission's work.

Finally, the Commission based all primary and corollary recommendations on sound science, including industry funded assessments, as well as research of authoritative experts in the fields we examined. The authors of those reports relied on many additional peer reviewed scientific reports in writing their technical reports.

We stand by the quality of the Commission's work, and the strength of the scientific data upon which we based our recommendations.

Feel free to contact us if you wish to discuss the Commission's work or any of its recommendations.

Sincerely,



John W. Carlin
Chairman, Pew Commission on Industrial Farm Animal Production
Former Kansas Governor and Archivist of the United States



Michael Blackwell, DVM, MPH
Vice Chairman, Pew Commission on Industrial Farm Animal Production
Former Dean, College of Veterinary Medicine, University of Tennessee/Knoxville

cc.

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