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Winterville, NC 28590

October 7, 2002

Dr. Stephen F. Sundlof  
Center Director  
HFV-1, Room 482  
FDA Center for Veterinary Medicine  
7500 Standish Place  
Rockville, MD, 20855

Dear Dr. Sundlof:

As veterinarians in broiler production, we are writing regarding the issue of antibiotic usage in commercial chicken production. While prevention is the cornerstone of our disease control programs, that is sometimes not sufficient. Treatment of active bacterial disease is an essential process. Such treatment affects animal welfare, food quality and economics. Antimicrobial drugs (including antibiotics) are a valuable entity in that there are very few available and fewer new ones on the horizon.

We too are concerned about antibiotic resistance as both public health and animal (poultry) health issues. This situation indeed requires active scientific scrutiny. As such we support the science involved in the fluoroquinolone discussion of resistance in both food borne pathogens and poultry pathogens. However, we believe that the resistance issue is multifactorial and that the judicious usage, monitoring and continuing education programs offer more potential to impact this problem than removal of a single antibiotic.

Interaction between private practitioners and government is an important part of developing solutions and resolving issues such as this one. We have demonstrated our interest through meetings with you and your staff. We hope this active dialogue will continue. Science and communication are the keys to effectively working on this and other issues affecting us all.

Thank you for considering our comments and we look forward to working with you in the future on this and other matters.

Sincerely,



Rick Sharpton, DVM, MS  
President, Association of Veterinarians in Broiler Production

cc: Dr. Lester Crawford  
Secretary Tommy Thompson

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