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Commissioner Jane Henney, M.D.
U.S. Food & Drug Administration
5600 Fishers Lane
Rockville, MD 20857

January 4, 2001

Dear Commissioner Henney,

I am concerned about the safety of rBGH (Bovine Growth Hormone) in milk and dairy products. Both Canada and the European Union have prohibited rBGH because of the potential human and animal health impacts associated with it. Veterinarians in Germany have refused to administer rBGH to cows because it violates their professional code of ethics, which forbids intentional harm to animals. Australia, New Zealand and Japan have also rejected the use of rBGH.

Studies show that cows injected with rBGH have suffered from increased udder infections (mastitis), severe reproductive problems, digestive disorders, food and leg ailments, persistent sores, and have much shorter life-spans. Nutritional energy meant to sustain the entire cow becomes almost entirely dedicated to milk production. Vital nutrients are leached from other parts of her body to support the increased milk production. An rBGH-injected cow, because of the increased incidence of disease, requires greater amounts of antibiotics than a normal cow.

Dairy cows injected with rBGH give milk containing elevated levels of IGF-1 (Insulin-like Growth Factor). Studies published in *Science* and *The Lancet* have linked high levels of IGF-1 to increased incidence of prostate and breast cancer. Researchers at Stanford University and the National Institutes of Health found that high concentrations of the IGF-1 hormone stimulate cancer cell growth. In the *International Journal of Health Sciences*, University of Illinois scientist, Dr. Samuel Epstein, warns that elevated levels of IGF-1 in milk from cows injected with rBGH is a potential risk factor for breast cancer in humans. These cancer studies raise serious health questions about the safety of milk from rBGH-treated cows.

By ignoring warnings from both Europe and Canada and numerous cancer studies, the FDA endangers the well-being of Americans and their dairy cows. Please protect the health of cows and consumers and ban the use of rBGH.

Sincerely,



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