

October 13, 1999

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Dear Commissioner Henney,

I am writing in response to Petition #99P-0485 to urge you to ban medically useful antibiotics from livestock feed.

For decades, livestock producers have fed human antibiotics to hogs, cows and poultry to speed their growth or counteract the effects of crowded, unsanitary living conditions and poor hygiene. In fact, over one third of the antibiotics manufactured in the US each year are used added to animal feed. Mounting evidence has proven that the overuse of antibiotics for livestock makes the drugs less effective for humans.

Scientists, health organizations and governments around the world are urging that antibiotics not be squandered to fatten livestock. The World Health Organization recommended that antibiotics used to treat humans should not be used to promote animal growth; the GAO reported that "research has linked three diseases with antibiotic-resistant strains affecting humans to the use of antibiotics in animals"; and the European Union has already banned human antibiotics in animal feed.

I urge you not to allow an antibiotic to be used in livestock feed if that antibiotic is used for human medicine. Please tell me how you plan to address this looming health crisis.

Thank you,



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EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

99P 0485

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