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23 December 1999

Jane Henney , M.D.  
Commissioner, Food & Drug Administration  
5600 Fishers Lane , Room 1471  
Rockville MD 20857

re: FOOD SAFETY

Dear Dr. Henney:

This being written just before Christmas let me first wish for you a Happy and Successful New Year !

At the same time I wish FROM you action on two aspects of food safety in the next year.

The first concerns misuse or overuse of ANTIBIOTICS as growth promoters in the raising of livestock. Since this practice tends to develop antibiotic-resistant diseases in humans I urge you to promptly ban antibiotics use in animal raising, so we can continue to cure people, as has been done in many European countries.

The second concerns GENETICALLY ALTERED FOODS. It appears that neither proponents nor opponents know enough to scientifically assess their risks, negative sideeffects or benefits to permit their uncontrolled production.

It reminds me of the situation half a century ago, when we believed to have conquered malaria by means of aerosol-dispersed insecticide. Nobody anticipated the harm done by DDT at the end of the food chain, until Rachel Carson told us in "Silent Spring", and nobody visualized that the 'inert' Freon gases would become reactive at high altitudes and destroy the protective ozone layer. And, moreover, we did not eliminate malaria, which spreads wider now than before.

Let us not repeat the same mistake and act on the basis of very incomplete knowledge. Therefore ban genetically changed foods until we understand better what good and bad they entail. I think this is the FDA's duty !

Sincerely,  
*Gustav Carsch*  
Gustav Carsch

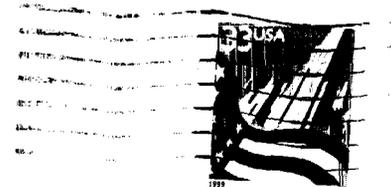
cc: Sen. DeWine            Sen. Voinovich  
      Sen. McCain            Rep. Ch abot

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