

January 25, 2001

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0533 '01 MAR 19 P3:00

Jane E. Henney, MD
Commissioner
US Food and Drug Administration
5600 Fishers Lane
Rockville, MD 20857-0001

Dear Dr. Henney;

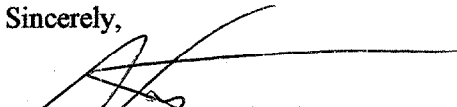
As an environmental educator, scientist and parent of two small children I am writing to ask the Food and Drug Administration to take action on a developing problem that threatens to undermine our current standard of living. Each year it is estimated that over 25 million pounds of antibiotics are delivered, not to school children or the sick and elderly, but to cattle, pigs and other livestock. While this number is staggering, what is of greater importance is the lack of accountability on behalf of the livestock industry to report their use of these antibiotics.

My own research involves the study of insecticide resistance in a number of agriculturally significant species. As a population geneticist I am well-aware that the widespread unregulated use of pesticides quickly results in the development of resistance mechanisms in the target population. The same holds true for antibiotics and microbial resistance.

The first step in the regulation of antibiotic use by the food industry is the establishment of a reporting system by the FDA to monitor the use of antibiotics. This system will allow for meaningful research to be conducted on the relationship between antibiotic use in livestock and the development of microbial resistance in medically important species. Voluntary reporting by the food industries will not suffice, only mandatory reporting to a federal agency.

As a parent who wishes a safe and healthy future for my children, and as a scientist who is deeply concerned on the use of antibiotics in livestock, I am asking your prompt attention to this matter. If I may be of any assistance to your efforts, please do not hesitate to contact me. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,



Michael Windelspecht Ph.D.
Department of Biology
Appalachian State University

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Dr. Michael Windelspecht
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