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March 3, 2001

Jane E. Henney, M.D.
Commissioner
U.S. Food and Drug Administration
5600 Fishers Lane
Rockville, MD 20857-0001


Dear Dr. Henney,

I am writing in regard to my concern about the overuse of antibiotics in agriculture. As you are aware, indiscriminate use of antibiotics selects for more virulent strains of bacteria, which poses a serious health concern. Much of this indiscriminate use occurs in the feeding of antibiotics as a prophylactic measure to promote health and enhance growth in cows, pigs, and chickens. In fact, staff from the Union of Concerned Scientists estimate that 70% of all antibiotics in this country are used in the livestock industry.

The creation of a federal antibiotic reporting system under the auspices of the FDA would provide researchers with good data to enable us to study the link between antibiotic use and the development of antibiotic resistance. It could also be helpful in establishing measures to curb the use of antibiotics in the agricultural industry. The scope of the problem necessitates action.

Please support the creation of a system to collect basic data on agricultural antibiotic use that can be used to help us study and control the problem of antibiotic resistance. Thank you.

Sincerely,

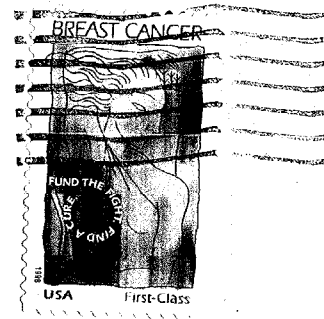


Debra Kirchhof-Glazier, Ph.D.

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D. GLAZIER
RR 1 Box 109
Huntingdon, PA 16652



Dr. Jane Henney
Commissioner / FDA
5600 Fishers Lane
Rockville MD 20857-0001

