

AllergyKids Foundation | AllergyKids Foundation | Alliance for the Prudent Use of Antibiotics | Alliance to Save our Antibiotics | American Grassfed Association | Arizona PIRG | Aspen Center for the Environmental Studies | Breast Cancer Prevention Partners | California Academy of Preventive Medicine | CALPIRG | California Public Health Association-North | Catholic Health Association of the United States | Center for Biological Diversity | Center for Environmental Health | Center for Urban Education About Sustainable Agriculture | Certified Naturally Grown | Chicago Physicians for Social Responsibility | Clean Water Action | Clinician Champions in Comprehensive Antibiotic Stewardship (CCCAS) Collaborative | ConnPIRG | CoPIRG | Consumer Education and Research Centre | Consumers International | Consumers Union of Japan | Fair Farms Maryland | Family Farm Defenders | Food & Water Watch | FoodBabe.com | Food Chain Workers Alliance | Food Tank | Grand Central Bakery | Health Care Without Harm | Hong Kong Consumer Council | IFOAM - Organics International | Illinois PIRG | Institute for a Sustainable Future | Jeremy Coller Foundation | Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future | Kewaunee Cares | Organic Consumers Association Confederation of Consumer Societies (KONFOP) | Lantern Restaurant | League of United Latin American Citizens | Lymphoma Foundation of America | Maryland PIRG | MassPIRG | Mercy For Animals | Midwest Environmental Justice Organization | Michigan Antibiotic Resistance Reduction Coalition | MRSA Survivors Network | Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance | Northeast Organic Farming Association, Massachusetts Chapter | Northeast Organic Farming Association of New York (NOFA-NY) | Northeast Organic Farming Association of Vermont | OSGATA : Organic Seed Growers and Trade Association | OSPiRG | PennPIRG | ReAct Africa | ReAct Asia Pacific | ReAct Europe | ReAct Latin America | ReAct North America / ReAct Strategic Policy Program | Real Food Media | Roots of Change | San Francisco Bay Area Chapter Physicians for Social Responsibility | San Francisco Baykeeper | San Francisco Marin Medical Society | Science and Environmental Health Network | Slow Food USA | Slow Food California | Society for Infectious Diseases Pharmacist | Southern California Public Health Association | Stop Foodborne Illness | TexPIRG | Universities Allied for Essential Medicines (UAEM) | WashPIRG | Western Nebraska Resources Council | WISPIRG | Women's Voices for the Earth

February 14th, 2018

Steve Easterbrook
McDonald's Corporation, CEO
2111 McDonald's Dr
Oak Brook, IL 60523

Dear Mr. Easterbrook:

We write you as representatives of organizations with millions of members to express our concerns about the overuse of antibiotics in livestock production, and ask McDonald's to establish a time-bound, meaningful, and verifiable policy that phases out the routine use of all medically important antibiotics from its pork and beef supply chains. McDonald's became an industry leader when in response to consumer demand, it eliminated all use of medically important antibiotics in its U.S. chicken supply chain in 2016. Extending this type of responsible antibiotics use policy to the company's pork and beef supplies is consistent with the goals included in the recently updated [Global Vision for Antibiotics Stewardship in Food Animals \(VAS\)](#) and warrants urgent attention.

Many people today still assume that when we get an infectious illness, the antibiotics prescribed by doctors make us better. But medical experts, including from the World Health Organization and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, are warning that the overuse of these precious drugs is already reducing their effectiveness. A recent report concluded that by 2050, drug-resistant bacteria could kill 10 million people worldwide every year. In fact, the World Health Organization just released new guidelines for the use of medically important antibiotics in food animals, where they clearly recommend complete restriction of the routine use of antibiotics in healthy animals, whether for growth promotion or disease prevention.

Despite this threat, many industrial farms are feeding large quantities of antibiotics to livestock unnecessarily. In the U.S. alone, 70 percent of medically important antibiotics are sold for use in food animals. In many cases, meat producers give antibiotics to animals that aren't sick on a routine basis in order to prevent disease brought on or spread by improper management practices or the unsanitary and overcrowded conditions on industrial farms.

Rather than using antibiotics routinely to prevent disease or promote growth, which can spur the spread of drug-resistant bacteria, McDonald's should require its producers to reserve antibiotics only to treat sick animals or control an identified disease outbreak.

Antibiotic resistance is a global issue and if we are to preserve our ability to save lives and treat dangerous infections, we need global action. The problem of antibiotic resistance cannot be fixed unless the livestock sector and large meat buyers, such as McDonald's, are part of the solution.

We thank you for ensuring that McDonald's fulfilled its U.S. commitment to serve only chicken raised without antibiotics important to human medicine. We are also encouraged by your company's recently announced VAS, which includes important objectives such as phasing out routine antibiotic use throughout its meat supply chain globally. Now it is time to convert these goals into effective time-bound commitments for McDonald's beef and pork supplies.

Given McDonald's size and scope, a meaningful commitment with concrete timelines to purchase only meat raised without the routine use of medically important antibiotics will send a clear signal to meat producers and consumers that preserving the efficacy of these precious medicines is a top priority. It will set the bar that your competitors, including Wendy's and Burger King, should strive to reach.

We look forward to your response and continued leadership on this extremely important public health issue.

Sincerely,

Matthew Wellington, Antibiotics Program Director,
U.S. PIRG Education Fund

Laura Rogers, Deputy Director,
Antibiotic Resistance Action Center, the George Washington University

Lena Brook, Interim Director, Food & Agriculture Program,
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