

ANTIBIOTICS OFF THE MENU



June 4, 2019

Todd A. Penegor
Chief Executive Officer
The Wendy's Company
1 Dave Thomas Blvd.
Dublin, OH 43017



Dear Mr. Penegor:



We write to you as members and allies of Antibiotics Off the Menu, a coalition representing millions of supporters, to express our concerns about the overuse of antibiotics in livestock production, and ask Wendy's to establish a time-bound, meaningful, and verifiable policy that phases out the routine use of all medically important antibiotics from its beef supply chains.



Given the recent progress in the marketplace, including the new McDonald's antibiotic use reduction policy in beef, there is no better time for other leading U.S. burger restaurants to meaningfully address the overuse of medically important antibiotics in their supply chains. Wendy's has taken some steps toward addressing antibiotic use, including recent pledges to source from the Progressive Beef program and to purchase only BQA-certified beef. However, these approaches are not likely to substantially reduce antibiotic use in Wendy's beef supplies. Strong time-bound and verifiable policies, consistent with your chicken commitment, that phase out the routine use of all medically important antibiotics across all of Wendy's beef supplies, are what's necessary to make real progress in addressing the critical global health threat of antibiotic resistance.



As you are likely aware, antibiotic resistance is one of the gravest public health threats in the world today. A UK government-sponsored report projects that deaths from antibiotic-resistant infections will exceed cancer deaths globally by 2050 unless something is done. The Infectious Disease Society of America (IDSA) cites new estimates that over 160,000 U.S. deaths annually may be attributed to drug-resistant infections (more than seven times current Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates).



Despite this threat, many industrial farms feed large quantities of antibiotics to livestock unnecessarily. Even with the overall decline reflected in 2017 U.S. FDA data, livestock sales of medically important antibiotics still represent almost two-thirds of overall sales of these precious drugs. Meat producers often give antibiotics routinely to animals that aren't sick in order to prevent disease brought on or spread by unhealthy diets as well as unsanitary and overcrowded conditions. In late 2017, the World Health Organization (WHO) released guidelines calling for the elimination of all routine use of medically important antibiotics in food-producing animals, including for disease prevention purposes. Antibiotics should be reserved for treating sick animals. Additionally, this past fall, the European Parliament voted overwhelmingly to ban the practice of feeding antibiotics preventively to groups of healthy farm animals; the ban goes into effect in 2022.

A meaningful commitment with concrete timelines to only purchase beef 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 for Wendy's. It will also establish the company as an industry leader in the fight against antibiotic resistance.

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

Sincerely,

Alliance for Natural Health USA
Alliance for the Prudent Use of Antibiotics (APUA)
American Medical Student Association
Antibiotic Resistance Action Center, GW Milken Institute School of Public Health
Breast Cancer Prevention Partners
California Public Health Association-North
CALPIRG
Center for Environmental Health
Center for Food Safety
Chicago chapter, Physicians for Social Responsibility
Clean Water Action
Clinician Champions in Comprehensive Antibiotic Stewardship Collaborative
Compassion Over Killing
Consumer Reports
CUESA
Environmental Working Group
Farm Forward
Farm Sanctuary
Food & Water Watch
Food Animal Concerns Trust
Food Chain Workers Alliance
FoodBabe.com

Friends of the Earth
Health Care Without Harm
Illinois PIRG
Institute for a Sustainable Future
Jeremy Coller Foundation
Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future
Kewaunee CARES
League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC)
Linda and Gene Farley Center for Peace, Justice & Sustainability
Lymphoma Foundation of America
Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association
Maryland PIRG
Massachusetts General Hospital
MomsRising.org
MRSA Survivors Network
National Medical Association
Natural Resources Defense Council
Next Bites
Northeast Organic Farming Association/Massachusetts Chapter (NOFA/Mass)
NY Public Interest Research Group
Organic Seed Growers and Trade Assn (OSGATA)
Physicians for Social Responsibility, San Francisco Bay Area Chapter
ReAct Asia Pacific
ReAct Europe
ReAct Latin America
ReAct Strategic Policy Program
Real Food Generation
Roots of Change
San Francisco Baykeeper
Science and Environmental Health Network
Slow Food USA
The Northeast Organic Farming Association of New York (NOFA-NY)
Tufts Medical Center
U.S. PIRG Education Fund
Union of Concerned Scientists
Universities Allied for Essential Medicines (UAEM)
UT Health Houston, Texas
Waterkeeper Alliance
Western Nebraska Resources Council