

HOLD THE ANTIBIOTICS McDONALD'S

5/26/2022

Chris Kempczinski

McDonald's Corporation, CEO

Dear Mr. Kempczinski,

We write to you as ranchers and farmers to urge you to follow through on reducing antibiotic use in your beef supply chain. Doing so will provide a much needed incentive to conventional livestock producers to stop overusing life-saving medicines, and signal to consumers that McDonald's is dedicated to promoting more sustainable farming practices.

When McDonald's stopped serving chicken raised with medically important antibiotics in 2016 it helped lead to a significant shift away from antibiotic overuse across the chicken industry. Your influence can be just as far reaching in beef production, and it's sorely needed.

It's common practice in conventional beef production to use medically important antibiotics to compensate for industrial farming conditions. For example, a study published in 2020 showed that beef cattle on several feedlots in the U.S. were treated with macrolide antibiotics for an average of 135 consecutive days. Macrolides are a class of antibiotics that are considered critically important to human health by the World Health Organization, but they're typically used on feedlots to prevent or treat liver abscesses in cattle as a result of improper diets. That's just one instance where conventional production relies on antibiotics as a crutch, instead of improving the conditions of the animals to keep them healthy naturally.

Overusing antibiotics breeds drug resistant bacteria that can sicken animals and people with infections that are difficult, and sometimes impossible, to treat. Losing effective antibiotics isn't just a human health threat, it would be an animal welfare disaster. These drugs should be used sparingly, and only when absolutely necessary to treat a sick animal.

We are calling on McDonald's to fulfill its previous commitments and continue to lead on this issue by:

1. Following through on setting meaningful reduction targets for medically important antibiotics across its global beef supply chain.
2. Publicly reporting on progress regarding your commitment to prohibit routine use of medically important antibiotics for prevention of disease.
3. Adopting a third-party, independent auditor with expertise in antibiotics to verify antibiotics use practices amongst your suppliers to ensure public confidence in your progress.

As a leader in the fast food sector and the beef production industry, McDonald's is poised to lead the way in producing meat ethically and without the overuse of antibiotics.

We appreciate your attention to this pressing issue.

Sincerely,

Luke E Jacobsen, Nebraska
Caleb Baker, RC Farm, Iowa
Bruce Stauffer, Frosty Acres Ranch, South Dakota
Raya Carr, Mint Creek Farm, Illinois
Isaiah Jones, Kinwood Farm, Illinois
Jacob McGreal, McGreal Family Farm, Iowa
Paul Maggio, Starry Nights Farm, Wisconsin