

From: Jane Kolenko [REDACTED]  
Sent: Saturday, December 07, 2013 8:04 PM  
To: Almanza, Al - FSIS; AGSEC - OES  
Subject: Please Make A Moral Decision

Please use the petition that was received from the Animal Legal Defense Fund as a public request to clarify dangerously confusing labeling in the use of antibiotics in meat and poultry. The rampant abuse of antibiotics that plagues factory farms poses a disastrous threat to human health and safety and to the well-being of animals by creating antibiotic resistant "superbugs" among other complications. Yet, the agricultural industry is not required to disclose its use of antibiotics to consumers.

People rely on the USDA to protect them by regulating the use of dangerous drugs. Labeling is the main way shoppers understand what they are purchasing and feeding to their families. Producers who fail to disclose the truth about their products are harming consumers. Information about food safety and production methods is crucial to the ability to make informed choices and the USDA has a duty to empower citizens with this knowledge, especially in the face of one of the largest public health threats of our time.

Animals also need the USDA to act on ALDF's petition immediately. Factory farms inherently rely on mass administration of antibiotics. The intensive confinement central to industrial agriculture weakens the immune systems of factory farmed animals by causing immense physiological stress. Instead of addressing these terrible conditions, factory farms turn to "sub-therapeutic" (non-illness related) doses of antibiotics as a "quick fix." This abuse promotes rapid animal growth, less feeding of animals, and saves producers money. But the animals continue to suffer the horrors of intense confinement, unsanitary conditions, rapid hormonal growth, and reduction in feed. In the end, misusing antibiotics is a win for agribusiness but a loss for animals and for consumers.

Millions of animals are being harmed and consumers misled by this failure to accurately label food products and this is a matter critical to public and animal health.

I am a 45 year old woman who chose to become a vegetarian six years after taking the time to understand all sides of the animal welfare argument. I have a decent understanding of the intricate relationship that the farming industry has with the government and support farmers. What I do not understand nor support is why today's cruel animal farming methods are so heavily boosted.

I implore you to use your morals to help guide decisions. You have the power to begin the shift to entirely humane means of farming. You could write history.

Sincerely,  
Jane Kolenko

