

Dear (elected official)

I am writing because I believe that the factory farming of food animals poses one of the most urgent threats to our health, environment, and culture. The only way we can create a healthy food system is by supporting healthy farms operated by family farmers that are able to care for their land, animals, and communities.

Consumers alone cannot change this system. Our government must put an end to perverse laws, agricultural subsidies, and regulations that reward heavily polluting animal factory farms (CAFOs) at the expense of our rivers, rural communities, and health system. Conventional confinement systems for hogs, laying hens, and veal calves are inhumane. Physicians and medical and health associations around the country are warning against the overuse of antibiotics in animal food production facilities. Independent farmers who want to produce healthy foods have difficulties marketing their products because of the corporate domination of our food distribution system.

We have been warned for many years about the health, environmental, and ethical problems associated with industrial animal factories. I urge you, as my legislative representative, not to vote for any bill, policy, or regulation that favors factory farming operations. More importantly, I urge you to support a moratorium on this inhumane and unsustainable form of food production, including the continued use of antibiotics for growth promotion rather than medical need.

Most of the countries in the European Union have long acknowledged the tragedy of industrial animal food production and are making efforts to decrease pollution, limit health impacts, and support diverse family farmers that raise animals humanely and sustainably. It is time for the United States to join in that effort.

One day we may look back on the present treatment of domestic livestock the same way we once looked upon human slavery: an ethical crisis that requires our urgent action.

Respectfully,