

Raszka Shelley

From: Nathan Moomaw <nathan@moomawfarm.com>
Sent: Monday, March 23, 2015 11:01 PM
To: Gallagher Chuck; Raszka Shelley
Subject: Written Testimony in Support of HB 2598

I'm writing to express my support for HB 2598. I am a full-time livestock producer in Oregon City; and I raise hogs, chicken, sheep, and rabbits. I sell all of the meat I produce to individuals and families in the Willamette Valley. One of the main reasons people choose to buy meat from me is because they want to avoid meat that has been raised with antibiotics. My customers know that using antibiotics routinely to promote faster growth in livestock is an unnecessary risk to human health.

Large-scale industrial agriculture operations use antibiotics as a way to slightly improve the efficiency of producing meat in confinement and to compensate for the losses in productivity related to the constant stress their livestock experience from being raised in very high density. The regular use of low levels of antibiotics within a population of billions of animals creates a situation in which bacteria are certain to become resistant to those antibiotics, and in the unfortunate event that a person becomes infected with those bacteria, it can quickly become a life-threatening situation. And, the problem is being made worse by the falling cleanliness standards of the large-scale processors, who are choosing to speed up their processing lines instead of making them safer, which results in a higher likelihood that a consumer will become infected by eating or handling the meat.

In 2013, Consumer Reports did a study of several national brands of chicken and found that more than half of the samples contained fecal matter. The study also found that half of the samples contained bacteria that were resistant to three or more antibiotics commonly used to treat infections in people. It is clear that the industry has been putting profits ahead of consumers' well-being for a long time and they cannot be trusted to do what's right for our health. Fortunately, public awareness of this issue has grown to the point that we can begin to correct the situation and force the industry to behave more responsibly. McDonald's recently received so much public pressure that they agreed to switch to buying only chicken raised without antibiotics.

Routine use of antibiotics is not necessary for raising livestock. In 2000, the pork industry in Denmark ceased using antibiotics to promote growth and there was no decrease in production.

Thank you for accepting my written testimony.

Sincerely,
Nathan Moomaw
Owner/Farmer
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