



**PEW COMMISSION ON  
INDUSTRIAL FARM  
ANIMAL PRODUCTION**

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**Elected Officials, Health & Environmental Organizations, and Editorial Writers Weigh In on Pew Commission's Recommendations to Change the Way Industry Raises Food Animals**

(Washington, DC – May 8, 2008) The response to the Pew Commission on Industrial Farm Production's (PCIFAP) final report and recommendations has been overwhelming. Influential elected officials, health, environmental and farm organizations and newspaper editorial boards are weighing in on the Commission's report and recommendations, which, if followed, could help alleviate the negative effects the industrial farm animal production system currently poses on public health, the environment, rural communities and animal welfare. The report garnered so much attention that the White House Office of Science & Technology Policy invited PCIFAP staff to debrief several of its staff members last week on the Commission's report.

U. S. Senator John Kerry (D-MA) has long been a critic of the industrial farm animal production system. In fact, many of the same people he and his wife, Teresa Heinz Kerry, highlighted in their book "This Moment on Earth" gave impassioned testimony and presentations to PCIFAP Commissioners. Senator Kerry recently had this to say about the Commission's report:

"The big corporate farming operations described in this important report should be recognized for what they really are – factories. The big corporate processors and integrators have promoted consolidation in the agriculture industry, and these large facilities should be subject to the same environmental protections as other large polluters. I am concerned about recent Bush Administration proposals, which would exempt these facilities from monitoring and reporting. Local communities deserve to know about the pollutants these industrial operations are spewing in to the air they breathe and the water they drink, and we should protect against these threats by using all the policy tools at our disposal."

**U.S. Senator John Kerry**

U.S. Senator Edward Kennedy (D-MA), the Chairman of the Health, Education, Labor and Pension Committee, has long recognized the risks of imprudent use of antimicrobials in food animal production. His proposed legislation "The Preservation of Antibiotics for Medical Treatment Act of 2007" is currently being debated in Congress. In response to PCIFAP's views on antimicrobial use in food animals Senator Kennedy had this to say:

"The Pew Commission report makes clear that strict controls are needed to prevent the excessive use of antibiotics in agriculture that could lead to antibiotic-resistant infections in humans. The evidence-based recommendations strongly support pending legislation in Congress to require full assessment of the risks of antibiotic use in animals, and withdrawal of approval for any drug that contributes to such resistance."

**U.S. Senator Edward Kennedy**

U.S. Rep. John D. Dingell (D-MI), the Chairman of the Committee on Energy and Commerce, who has openly challenged the EPA's recent plan to exempt IFAP facilities from reporting dangerous airborne pollutants, had this to say about the Commission's final report:

“While I do not concur with every recommendation put forth by the Pew Commission, the Pew Report on Industrial Farm Animal Production provides important insights into the public health and environmental effects of agriculture concentration. “

“The information in this report concerning the adverse effects that Concentrated Animal Farming Operations have on air and water quality underscores the dangers in loosening or eliminating air emission reporting requirements for pollutants like hydrogen sulfide and ammonia. The Committee will continue to hold the EPA accountable for the Administration's ill-conceived proposal to eliminate these decades-old reporting requirements.”

“I will also continue to strongly oppose legislative efforts to exempt Big Agribusiness from laws that help protect our drinking water supplies.”

“The Pew Commission's Report has made very valuable contributions to the debate surrounding these issues, and the Committee on Energy and Commerce will continue to pursue these matters.”

#### **U.S. Rep. John D. Dingell**

Maryland Attorney General Douglas Gansler recognizes that intensive animal agriculture is a significant contributor to the pollution of the Chesapeake Bay and other waters of his state. The Attorney General had this to say about the Commission's report in a letter to John Carlin, PCIFAP Chairman:

“As Attorney General, I appreciate the efforts your Commission has made to develop this very important report on Consolidated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs).”

“This report has provided me, and others who are attempting to clean up the Chesapeake Bay and restore Maryland's water quality, an important tool for finding the middle ground that will allow our agriculture heritage to shine while improving water quality.”

“I look forward to sharing this report with the other members of the National Association of Attorneys General (NAAG). As co-chair of the Environmental Committee of NAAG, it is my hope that this document can help state Attorneys General as they attempt to deal with the effects of CAFOS in their state.”

#### **Douglas Gansler, Attorney General of Maryland**

The American Public Health Association (APHA) was one of the first health organizations to recognize the public health risks that intensive animal agriculture can pose. In 2003, the organization called for a moratorium on new concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs) until additional scientific data on the risks to public health have been collected and uncertainties resolved. This is what George Benjamin, MD, FACP, Executive Director of the APHA, had to say about the PCIFAP's final report.

"Our health is inextricably linked to our food -- both what we eat and how it is produced. But our current food system and how we get food from farm to consumer is unsustainable. The Pew Commission Report provides sound recommendations that will help improve access to healthy, affordable food and better protect the public's health, the environment and the communities in which we live."

**Georges C. Benjamin, MD, FACP, executive director of the American Public Health Association**

National and regional environmental organizations have taken note of the PCIFAP final report and are applauding the Commission's work. The Environmental Defense Fund and Midwest Environmental Advocates had this to say:

- "The report recognizes the economic drivers propelling the continued concentration of farm animal production and bases its recommendations on moving from the realities of today's markets to the realities of tomorrow's limitations in energy, water and climate change. Finding and advancing economically and environmentally sustainable practices and approaches for animal operations is critical for the health of our natural resources and the nation's agricultural sectors."

**Joe Rudek, Ph.D. Senior Scientist, Environmental Defense Fund**

- "This report represents the most comprehensive and scientifically-sound critique of the modern industrial livestock industry to date. It addresses a broad range of issues, from antibiotic resistance to water pollution, and presents sound recommendations that will keep the industry thriving while protecting the environment and public health."

**Jamie Saul, Staff Attorney with Midwest Environmental Advocates**

In a radio interview Missouri Farmer's Union president Russ Kremer told a Brownfield reporter that he supports the majority of PCIFAP's recommendations.

"(The report) confirms what our organization has been saying for quite some time that the industrialized type of agriculture is not sustainable... and it's not necessarily the best system for society. We realize and we must reckon with the fact that the era of cheap energy is now gone. And these systems... basically grew on account of cheap inputs, especially cheap energy and they (farms) became concentrated. For the most part, I believe that the Pew study is a warning, and it's something that I agree with too, that we must prepare a strategy for change immediately and hope that our agriculture (system) will transcend out of one that is more industrialized to one that's more family farm and community based.

This is something that we have seen that is driven by consumers. Whether we think in agriculture that we can design a system for our own convenience and our own good and try to convince the consumers that it's the best thing for them, you know that's ludicrous thinking. Consumers, who we depend on for our income, are demanding a change throughout the country. They are concerned about the quality of living, the quality of their environment. I think it's a sign of the times. I

think that we must head to the warning and produce some systems and change some policy that will encourage a different style agriculture.”

**Russ Kremer, President, Missouri Farmer’s Union**

The Humane Society of the United States has been instrumental in lobbying on behalf of several state laws that prohibit the use of gestation crates for pigs, so far, Florida, Arizona and Oregon passed such legislation. Currently HSUS is lobbying for a California ballot initiative that calls for the phase out of gestation crates for pigs, veal crates and battery cages for laying hens. Wayne Pacelle, president and CEO of The HSUS had this to say about PCIFAP.

"Pew's esteemed panel of scientists, veterinary school officials, ranchers, and public officials has emphatically recommended moving away from cages and crates on factory farms, and that's exactly what our proposed ballot initiative prescribes for California. It is cruel and inhumane to confine animals in cages so small they can barely move for nearly their whole lives, nor are these confinement systems good for public health or the environment. The panel's recommendations come at a perfect time as Californians consider this ballot measure."

**Wayne Pacelle, president and CEO of The HSUS**

The editorial departments of several newspapers across the country, large and small, support many of PCIFAP’s recommendations including the LA Times, Michigan’s Battle Creek Enquirer and Nebraska’s Journal Star. Below are excerpts from each:

- “Just when everyone is fretting over the price of food, the Pew Commission on Industrial Farm Animal Production released a report that outlines the ways in which factory farming exacts an additional toll on both the Earth and the consumer. The pollution of streams and groundwater and the greenhouse gases produced by animal waste entail actual dollar costs borne largely by taxpayers, as well as more intrinsic concerns about human health, environmental damage and animal well-being.

The good news is that, among the trends laid out in the report, the most troubling is also among the most fixable: overuse of antibiotics in livestock, a major contributor to the creation of drug-resistant bacteria and thus a direct assault on human health.”

“Federal legislation that would phase out the use of livestock antibiotics (except to treat sick animals) is stalled, despite the endorsement of the American Medical Assn. and the American Academy of Pediatrics. No matter how frightening the grocery tab is getting, we cannot afford to lose the effectiveness of existing antibiotics. Public health comes before cheap meat.”

***Los Angeles Times, May 1, 2008***

- “Most of us realize that the quaint, pastoral image of the family farm, with a handful of cattle grazing in the field and pigs wallowing near the barn, is fading into history. We know that in order to feed the United States and much of the rest of the world, American agriculture is an industry that must utilize the latest technology on a huge scale.

But a report out this week by the Pew Commission on Industrial Farm Animal Production should give us pause to think about the serious problems being created by mammoth industrial farms.”

“The need to raise animals quickly for slaughter to meet global demand must be balanced with practices that do not threaten the environment or risk the health of humans and animals.

It is better that such issues be addressed now rather than waiting until the damage to our environment and health is widespread and irreparable.”

***Battle Creek (Michigan) Enquirer, May 2, 2008***

- “Actually, in recommending restrictions on animal antibiotics, the (PCIFAP) commission merely was echoing something the medical community has been saying for years. The American Medical Association, the American Academy of Pediatrics and the American Public Health Association are among the organizations that have endorsed legislation that would ban routine use of antibiotics in animal feed.”

“Because \$4 billion a year already is spent on treating drug-resistant bacteria in the United States, the recommendation to restrict routine use of antibiotics in animal feed makes sense. The livestock industry should stop stonewalling and start listening.”

***Journal Star (Lincoln, Nebraska), May 2, 2008***

Over the next few months, the Pew Commission on Industrial Farm Animal Production will continue to release information and reports on its website ([www.pcifap.org](http://www.pcifap.org)) including a 20 minute video depicting a visit to Duplin County, North Carolina, the largest hog producing county in the state. PCIFAP Commissioners will continue to promote their recommendations across the nation. They can be reached through communications contacts posted on the PCIFAP website.

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