

The Honorable Ron Klain
Chief of Staff to the President
The White House
1st Floor, West Wing
Washington, DC 20500-0004

Dear Mr. Klain:

United States agricultural producers of fruits, vegetables, crops, ornamental plants, poultry, milk, livestock and fish are committed to continuous improvement in the stewardship of antimicrobials to preserve their effectiveness in protecting plants, animals and public health. Plant health professionals and veterinarians are essential partners to farmers and ranchers in this critical effort. As a major global supplier of agricultural products, U.S. antimicrobial stewardship is an important attribute of the products we provide to the world, and we take our responsibility seriously. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is an essential part of these efforts.

As the world emerges from the COVID-19 pandemic, awareness of the importance of public health has never been higher and global food security remains front of mind given pandemic induced disruptions of international and domestic supply chains. This duality illustrates the importance of inclusion of the USDA in the interagency process integral to forming U.S. public health and antimicrobial resistance policy.

U.S. agriculture is working to produce more products to meet the global food demands while decreasing our environmental footprint. In doing so, we must not only address public health but also animal health and welfare. The USDA is a crucial partner to agricultural producers in helping to address these priorities, working with us to minimize the use of antimicrobials through the research they are doing on production, plant and animal health, food safety and other pertinent areas. USDA also serves as a globally recognized and trusted leader in the development of science- and risk-based international standards at the CODEX Alimentarius, World Organization for Animal Health (OIE), and the Tripartite of the OIE, the Food and Agriculture Organization and World Health Organization. USDA understands the intricacies of agricultural production and the types, uses and regulation of antimicrobials in U.S. agriculture as well as the scientific underpinning justifying their use. USDA can also be a helpful interagency partner to review high-level agreements and vet statements touching on antimicrobial resistance to ensure animal and public health is protected while minimizing possible negative impacts on trade in agricultural products.

As the United States engages in discussions on antimicrobial resistance or antimicrobial use with other governments and in intergovernmental organizations, the undersigned groups representing America's farmers, ranchers, fisheries, food and agricultural processors, plant and animal scientists, veterinarians, and state departments of agriculture urge that USDA serve as an equal voice with other U.S. public health agencies in determining U.S. positions on One Health aspects of antimicrobial resistance or use.

Sincerely,

American Association of Bovine Practitioners
American Association of Small Ruminant Practitioners
American Association of Swine Veterinarians
American Catfish Association
American Dairy Goat Association
American Dairy Science Association
American Farm Bureau Federation
American Feed Industry Association
American Goat Federation
American Goat Initiative
American Meat Science Association
American Sheep Industry Association
American Society of Animal Science
American Veterinary Medical Association
Animal Health Institute
Biotechnology Innovation Organization
California Agricultural Commissioners and Sealers Association
California Citrus Mutual
California Citrus Quality Council
California Farm Bureau
California Fresh Fruit Association
California Specialty Crops Council
Catfish Farmers of America
Cherry Marketing Institute
CropLife America
FASS
Florida Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Association
Idaho Potato Commission
Minor Crop Farmer Alliance
National Association for the Advancement of Animal Science
National Association of State Departments of Agriculture
National Cattlemen's Beef Association
National Chicken Council
National Fisheries Institute
National Grain and Feed Association
National Institute for Animal Agriculture
National Milk Producers Federation
National Oilseed Processors Association
National Onion Association
National Pork Producers Council
National Turkey Federation
North American Meat Institute
North American Renderers Association
Northwest Horticultural Council

Pet Food Institute
Poultry Science Association
Produce Marketing Association
U.S. Dairy Export Council
United Egg Producers
United Fresh Produce Association
United States Cattlemen's Association
US Dairy Forage Research Center Stakeholder Committee
USA Poultry and Egg Export Council

cc:

The Honorable Tom Vilsack, Secretary of Agriculture
The Honorable Xavier Becerra, Secretary of Health and Human Services
The Honorable Eric Lander, Director, Office of Science and Technology Policy
The Honorable Jake Sullivan, National Security Advisor
Dr. Beth Cameron, Senior Director for Global Health Security and Biodefense