



March 16, 2016

The Honorable Jerry Moran
Chairman
Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural
Development, Food and Drug Administration,
and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jeff Merkley
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural
Development, Food and Drug Administration,
and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Robert Aderholt
Chairman
Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural
Development, Food and Drug Administration,
and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Sam Farr
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural
Development, Food and Drug Administration,
and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairmen Moran and Aderholt, and Ranking Members Merkley and Farr:

We, the undersigned organizations representing research and policy organizations, producers, purchasers, and infectious disease physicians and scientists, urge you to include funding in the fiscal year (FY) 2017 Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill to support the Administration's implementation of the [*National Action Plan for Combating Antibiotic-Resistant Bacteria*](#) through the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and at the Department of Agriculture (USDA). Recent reports that highly mobile resistance genes are emerging to 'last resort' antibiotics like colistin raise serious concerns over the future availability of these vital drugs. Combating this threat and avoiding a world without effective antibiotics will require increased and sustained federal investments in biomedical research, public health infrastructure and surveillance. We greatly appreciate the funding Congress provided across government to combat antibiotic resistant bacteria in the FY 2016 omnibus. We urge you to build on these investments in the FY 2017 appropriations legislation.

The President's FY 2017 Budget request included level funding of \$42 million at FDA for all Combating Antibiotic-Resistant Bacteria (CARB) priorities. Since 2012 the agency has worked diligently to advance policies that support judicious use of antibiotics in animal agriculture. FDA's industry guidance phasing out production uses of medically important antimicrobials was widely accepted by animal drug sponsors – all 26 affected sponsors, holding 283 affected applications, have agreed to modify antimicrobial labels by December 2016 – while the agency's new Veterinary Feed Directive (VFD) will strengthen animal husbandry and promote antibiotic stewardship by ensuring appropriate veterinary oversight of antibiotic use in animal feed. FDA's proposal to collect additional data under Section 105 of the Animal Drug User Fee Act (ADUFA) will improve understanding of the use and distribution of antibiotics in major food-producing species and help FDA reinforce producer efforts to ensure judicious use of medically important antibiotics. Importantly, FDA is seeking to transfer certain funds to support its collaboration with USDA to better understand how policy changes like the VFD will affect antibiotic usage and resistance trends, with a particular focus on data quality and effectively combining data sources to take full advantage of data that may already be captured through other channels.

The President's FY 2017 Budget request included \$61 million at USDA for antimicrobial resistance priorities, including an increase of \$10 million at the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS). The USDA funding would allow the department to support research to enhance understanding of the development of antimicrobial resistance and the spread of resistance genes in animals and humans. Funding would also support expanded dissemination of science-based knowledge to veterinarians and producers, and use of voluntary surveys to measure antibiotic use in animal agriculture. We encourage you to provide funding in FY 2017 for USDA's contribution to the CARB initiative, with a particular focus on the surveillance partnership between FDA and the USDA APHIS. This funding would support research priorities associated with antimicrobial resistance in animal agriculture, including the development of effective antibiotic alternatives. USDA has historically worked in close partnership with growers and producers throughout the food supply chain, and its decades of experience at gathering and protecting user and farm survey data will enable the agency to support efforts to better understand and evaluate antibiotic use and prioritize interventions, while providing value to producers through better animal management practices. With additional funding, this enhanced data will lead to more effective and targeted interventions for antibiotic stewardship and surveillance which will help both the producers and consumers.

We strongly urge you to support the antimicrobial resistance requests in both the FDA and USDA budgets. You can obtain additional information by contacting Lindsey Berman at The Pew Charitable Trusts at lberman@pewtrusts.org. We thank you for your leadership and for working with us to prevent a post-antibiotic era where common infections prove fatal.

Sincerely,

Wal-Mart Stores, Inc.

Cargill, Inc.

The Pew Charitable Trusts

Costco Wholesale

Hormel Foods

Infectious Disease Society of America

McDonald's USA, LLC

Applegate

Bon Appetit Management Company

Tyson Food, Inc.

CC:

The Honorable Thad Cochran
The Honorable Barbara Mikulski
The Honorable Hal Rogers
The Honorable Nita Lowey