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STATE OF MAINE

ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, CONSERVATION AND FORESTRY

HOUSE

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PETER EDGECOMB, CARIBOU

May 15, 2006

Seth H. Bradstreet, III, Commissioner
Maine Department of Agriculture, Food and Rural Resources Deering Bldg. - AMHI Complex
#28 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0028

Re: Nontherapeutic Use of Antibiotics

Dear Commissioner Bradstreet:

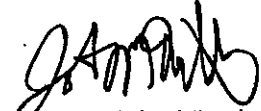
As chairs of the Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, we are writing to thank you for the department's leadership role in responding to the directive expressed in Resolve 2005, Chapter 82, Resolve to Examine the Nontherapeutic Use of Antibiotics. The committee has reviewed the report of the working group convened by then Acting Commissioner Ned Porter and Dr. Dora Mills and unanimously endorses the recommendations for administrative actions by the State of Maine to address the pressing public health problem of antibiotic resistance. The committee sincerely appreciates the work of all of the members of this working group, including Shelley Doak and Don Hoenig from the Department of Agriculture, Food and Rural Resources (Department of Agriculture).

We anticipate timely implementation of the recommendations by the relevant executive offices or agencies. Recommendation five directs the Department of Agriculture to enhance the Maine Cattle Health Assurance Program, Maine Beef, Dairy and Pork Quality Assurance Programs and parallel poultry and small ruminant programs to incorporate protocols for the prudent use of antibiotics. Recommendation six directs the Department of Agriculture to provide a continuing education course for licensed veterinarians on best management practices for the use of antibiotics. These are important steps in ensuring the prudent use of antibiotics in animal agriculture with the goal of maintaining the therapeutic efficacy of antibiotics in human medicine.

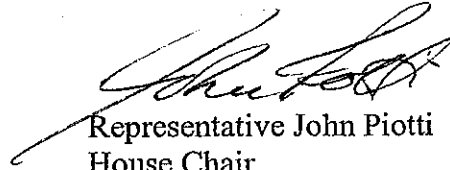
We ask that you submit to the committee by October 2006 a brief written report on the department's progress in implementing these recommendations and thank you in advance for the

your work in carrying out these recommendations. We believe this undertaking can help to advance Maine agriculture and protect the public health.

Sincerely,



Senator John Nutting
Senate Chair



Representative John Piotti
House Chair

cc: Governor John Baldacci
Edwin Porter, Deputy Commissioner

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May 24, 2006

The Honorable Olympia J. Snowe
154 Russell Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510-1903

Dear Senator Snowe:

Re: Nontherapeutic Use of Antibiotics

As chairs of the Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, we are writing to provide you with the attached report examining the use of antibiotics in animal agriculture with the goal of maintaining the therapeutic efficacy of antibiotics. The report was developed at the request of the committee by a study group composed of persons representing diverse interests and headed by the Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Agriculture, Food and Rural Resources. The committee applauds the study group for achieving consensus on this report and unanimously endorses the six recommendations found in the report.

Please direct your attention to the recommendations numbered 1,2 and 3 on pages 3 and 4 of the report and paraphrased below. We ask that each member of Maine's Congressional delegation do the following:

1. Urge the Food and Drug Administration to expedite risk assessments on previously approved antimicrobial drugs with particular emphasis on those drugs classified as "critically important" or "highly important" for therapeutic use in human medicine;
2. Support efforts at the federal level to reduce nontherapeutic use of antibiotics;
3. Support funding of the Food Animal Residue Avoidance Databank and the National Antimicrobial Resistance Monitoring System.

It is critical that the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), Center for Veterinary Medicine evaluate the use of antibiotics and the potential for development of antimicrobial

Resistance patterns, if present, need to be addressed. We must not jeopardize public health as a indirect consequence of antibiotic use in livestock.

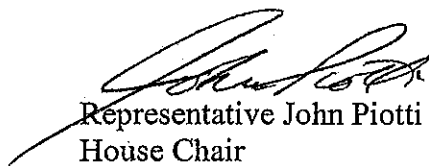
Recommendations 4,5 & 6 of the report relate to actions at the State level. We continue to communicate with the Commissioner of Maine Health and Human Services, the Maine Commissioner of Agriculture, Food and Rural Resources and the Commissioner of Financial and Administrative Services to monitor implementation of these recommendations. As stated in the report, most agricultural practices within the State of Maine employ the judicious use of antibiotics. However, most of the food purchased in Maine originates outside our borders. The State's ability to conduct research and impact production methods in other states is clearly limited.

We ask that you advocate for research on microbial resistance to antibiotics and promote the prudent use of antibiotics. Please copy this committee on any communications between your office and federal agencies concerning the nontherapeutic use of antibiotics. We would greatly appreciate any insight you might provide on actions being taken at the federal level to maintain the efficacy of antibiotics for use in human medicine and ensure the prudent use of antibiotics in animal agriculture.

Sincerely,



Senator John Nutting
Senate Chair



Representative John Piotti
House Chair

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PETER EDGECOMB, CARIBOU

May 15, 2006

Rebecca M. Wyke, Commissioner
Department of Administrative & Financial Services
#78 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0078

Re: Nontherapeutic Use of Antibiotics

Dear Commissioner Wyke:

As chairs of the Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, we are writing to thank you for your department's involvement in responding to the directive expressed in Resolve 2005, Chapter 82, Resolve to Examine the Nontherapeutic Use of Antibiotics. The committee has reviewed the report of the working group convened in response to the Resolve and unanimously endorses the recommendations for administrative actions by the State of Maine to address the pressing public health problem of antibiotic resistance. We sincerely appreciate the work of all of the members of this study committee, including Betty Lamoreau, Director of the Division of Purchases within DAFSS.

The Committee looks forward to the timely implementation of the recommendations by the relevant executive offices or agencies, including recommendation number four directing the Division of Purchases to implement a purchasing preference policy. This recommendation reads:

"It is the policy of the State to protect the public health by encouraging the prudent use of antibiotics. In soliciting bids for meat products, the Division of Purchases in the Department of Administrative and Financial Services shall inform meat suppliers that, assuming similarity in quality, quantity, availability and price, the State prefers to purchase products that have not been produced using medically important antibiotics for nontherapeutic purposes. Furthermore, the Division of Purchases shall continue to encourage school districts to take advantage of contracts awarded to suppliers whose products meet this preference.

The Division of Purchases will provide information through the Department website on the State purchasing preference, participating producers and suppliers, and additional information consistent with the State policy. The Division of Purchases will work with the Department of Education to provide a one-stop information service so that State agencies and

school districts can access information through the State websites and not incur any additional expenses to the individual districts and agencies.

The State policy, and the supporting educational efforts, will stress the importance of maintaining the effectiveness of antibiotics used in human medicine by encouraging reduced use of antibiotics in meat production."

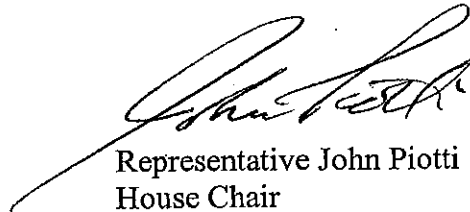
We ask that you submit to the committee by October 31, 2006 a brief written report on progress made by the Division of Purchases in implementing this recommendation.

We thank you and the division in advance for your work in carrying out this recommendation. We believe this undertaking can help to advance Maine agriculture and protect the public health.

Sincerely,



Senator John Nutting
Senate Chair



Representative John Piotti
House Chair

cc: Governor John Baldacci
Betty M. Lamoreau, Director, Division of Purchases

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PETER EDGECOMB, CARIBOU

May 15, 2006

Governor John Baldacci
#1 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333

Re: Nontherapeutic Use of Antibiotics

Dear Governor Baldacci:

As chairs of the Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, we are writing to provide you with the attached report on the use of antibiotics in animal agriculture and the goal of maintaining the therapeutic efficacy of antibiotics. This report was developed at the request of the committee by a study group composed of persons representing diverse interests and headed by Dora Mills for the Department of Health and Human Services and Edwin Porter for the Department of Agriculture, Food and Rural Resources. The committee applauds the study group for achieving consensus and unanimously endorses the six recommendations found in the report.

We hope you will find in this report encouragement for further action. Recommendations one, two, and three ask your office to weigh in at the federal level in support of reasonable measures the federal government can take to address antibiotic resistance. We would appreciate being copied on any such communication. In addition, we strongly support the administrative actions found in recommendations 4, 5 and 6 of the report. These steps will work to advance Maine agriculture and protect the public health. The Committee has sent letters to the Commissioner Bradstreet and Commissioner Wyke asking their departments to submit to the committee by October 30, 2006 brief written reports on the progress made in implementing these recommendations.

We thank the staff of the Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Agriculture, Food and Rural Resources, and the Department of Administrative and Financial Services for their contributions in developing the report. Thank you very much for your support of this important effort.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Nutting".

Senator John Nutting
Senate Chair

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Piotti".

Representative John Piotti
House Chair