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Brussels, 3rd December 2009

Dear Sir/Madam,

As the director of the Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future, I applaud the European Parliament and Vice-President Edward McMillan-Scott for convening today's global warming hearing and recognizing the importance of opening a worldwide dialogue regarding meat production's contributions to climate change. As one of the first supporters of the Meatless Monday Campaign, I also applaud Dr. Rajendra K. Pachauri and Sir Paul McCartney for encouraging individuals concerned about their "carbon footprints" to eat less meat. Reducing the amount of meat we eat just one day a week, particularly meat from industrially produced food animals, can help reduce greenhouse gas emissions and many other negative environmental and public health effects attributed to industrial food animal production.

Here in the United States, Americans eat much more meat than is recommended by our own health officials. Currently, men in the U.S. consume 170% of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's recommended daily allowance of meat while women eat 135%. Global demand for food animal products is at an unsustainable level and continues to increase. Current projections toward 2020 indicate that global demand for "animal protein" will increase by 50%, especially in developing nations. Many health experts attribute the over-consumption of meat with its saturated fat to increased risk of obesity, diabetes and cardio-vascular disease.

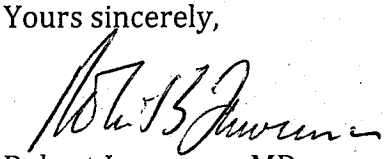
The U.S.-based Meatless Monday Campaign was first launched as a simple way for people to reduce their consumption of saturated fat, found mainly in meat and high-fat dairy products, by 15% to meet the Surgeon General's Healthy People 2010 goals for the nation. For the past seven years, the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health and the Center for a Livable Future have supported the non-profit initiative with technical assistance and scientific advice. Meatless Monday's mission has recently expanded to not only highlight health issues associated high meat diets, but also to help communicate how less meat consumption can protect the health of

our planet by reducing greenhouse gas emissions; minimizing water and fossil fuel usage; and decreasing air and water pollution.

The Pew Commission on Industrial Farm Animal Production, a project of the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health and Pew Charitable Trusts, found that the current industrial system of producing food animals in the United States too often poses unacceptable risks to public health, the environment and the welfare of the animals themselves, and that significant changes must be implemented now. Instead of heeding the Commission's warning, many large U.S. food producers are moving production to other countries like Poland, Mexico and China. It is my hope that the international community will take a closer look at the public health risks of adopting current U.S. industrial food animal production systems, particularly the inappropriate use of antibiotics that can lead to increased infections with antibiotic resistant bacteria such as MRSA. One U.S. study at a Boston hospital found that MRSA infections increased patients' hospital stay by 2 days and hospital charges by almost 7,000 U.S. Dollars.*

While there are no simple remedies for complex issues surrounding meat production, one thing is clear, reducing the amount of meat we eat is a good first step.

Yours sincerely,



Robert Lawrence, MD

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* *The Impact of Methicillin Resistance in Staphylococcus aureus Bacteremia on Patient Outcomes: Mortality, Length of Stay, and Hospital Charges.* (2005) Infection Control & Hospital Epidemiology. Sara E. Cosgrove, MD, MS; Youlin Qi, MD, MPH; Keith S. Kaye, MD, MPH; Stephan Harbarth, MD, MS; Adolf W. Karchmer, MD; Yehuda Carmeli, MD, MPH