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*The Campaign to End Antibiotic Overuse*

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## **EPA's New CAFO Rule Fails to Uphold Agency's Mission "To Protect Human Health," Says National Advocacy Group**

### ***Group Cites Recent FDA Acknowledgment that Antibiotic Overuse in Livestock is Linked to Antibiotic Resistance in Humans***

**Washington, DC** – The Keep Antibiotics Working Campaign (KAW) sharply criticized the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for issuing the new final rule today for Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) that fails to act on the growing threat of antibiotic resistance caused by the unnecessary use of antibiotics in CAFOs.

"The Food and Drug Administration acknowledged in its new draft guidance for animal drug approval and review that antibiotic use in animals contributes to antibiotic resistance in people, which makes it harder, if not impossible, to treat human illness," said David Wallinga, M.D., a physician and scientist for the Institute of Agriculture and Trade Policy. "Yet the EPA has ignored this problem by failing to deal with the massive and routine feeding of antibiotics to CAFO livestock that are not sick, the majority of which are antibiotics of importance to human medicine. Many European countries already raise livestock without routinely feeding them medically important antibiotics. While antibiotic overuse in human medicine is important, we can't afford to overlook the squandering of unnecessary antibiotics in raising food animals."

The Union of Concerned Scientists estimates that 70 percent of all antibiotics used in the U.S.- more than 24 million pounds each year - are routinely fed to beef cattle, hogs and poultry that are not sick to promote growth and compensate for cramped, unsanitary conditions on CAFOs. As much as 75% of these antibiotics are excreted in feces or urine. The manure is stored in open lagoons and/or spread as fertilizer onto agricultural fields. Runoff, leakage or overflow can allow antibiotics to reach surface and groundwater and, potentially, drinking water sources.

A recent groundbreaking study by the U.S. Geological Survey found antibiotics in 48 percent of 139 streams the USGS tested in 30 states, including 62 streams downstream from agricultural operations.

"By ignoring the pollution that results from the waste of life-saving antibiotics, the EPA's new CAFO rule fails to uphold the agency's stated mission 'to protect human health and to safeguard the natural environment — air, water, and land — upon which life depends,'" said Karen Florini, a senior attorney with Environmental Defense.

*KAW ([www.KeepAntibioticsWorking.com](http://www.KeepAntibioticsWorking.com)) is a coalition of health, consumer, agricultural, environmental, humane and other nonprofit advocacy groups with more than nine million members dedicated to eliminating a major cause of antibiotic resistance—the inappropriate use of antibiotics in farm animals.*

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