

AVMA Finds Pew Report Biased, Inaccurate

August 21, 2009 - The American Veterinary Medical Association released a detailed [statement](#) this week that identifies "significant flaws and major dalliances from both science and reality" in the Pew Commission on Industrial Farm Animal Production's 2008 report *Putting Meat on the Table: Industrial Farm Animal Production in America*.

The Pew Commission's report, among its many sensationalized claims, infers - without substantive evidence - that medications used for disease prevention in food animals are to blame for antibiotic resistance in humans and calls for the elimination of certain critical types of medicines used in livestock production. Most scientists, however, agree that improper use of antibiotics in human medicine is the greatest contributing factor in the formation of resistant bacteria affecting humans, thus, the Animal Agriculture Alliance Coalition issued a [statement](#) in May 2008 on the inaccuracies of Pew's statement on this and the other issues addressed in its report.

The Alliance applauds AVMA's independent review of the Pew report and its effort to correct much of the misinformation presented. AVMA is a non-profit association established to advance the science and art of veterinary medicine. It represents 86 percent of all U.S. veterinarians from a wide variety of practices, including private, academic and public health. Veterinarians play a vital and unique role in protecting both human and animal health and strive to protect the limited tools they have available to keep both groups safe; thus AVMA's concern over the Pew report's recommendations to eliminate certain health products approved by the federal Food & Drug Administration.

After analyzing the Pew report, AVMA identified several areas of concern. It found the Commission to be biased, failing to incorporate findings from a substantial amount of the subject matter presented by experts called in to advise them. The group stated the findings are "based on what is *possible*, rather than what is *probable*," discriminating against large farms without scientific backing.

The Commission's statements on antimicrobial resistance, the environment and animal welfare are seen as the most important to veterinary medicine by the AVMA. The veterinary organization's CEO, Dr. Ron DeHaven, previously released a letter to Congress outlining some of AVMA's concerns with the report, as well as the scare-mongering advertising campaign undertaken by Pew in targeted Metro stations on or near Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C. In his letter, Dr. DeHaven stated, "While the ads may be engaging, they are misleading and contain information that is scientifically untrue."

Pew's report recommendations are currently being used by activists to advocate for the passage of H.R. 1549 and S. 619, otherwise known as the Preservation of Antibiotics for Medical Treatment Act (PAMTA). These measures would restrict the use of antibiotics in livestock production, severely compromising the ability of America's farmers and ranchers to provide a safe food supply for the world. AVMA has taken a strong stand against the proposed PAMTA legislation, and its [Government Action Center](#) is available to help members of the public contact their representatives about the implications of PAMTA.

The Animal Agriculture Alliance, a 501(c) (3) non-profit organization, is a broad-based coalition of individual producers, producer organizations, suppliers, packer-processors, private industry scientists, veterinarians and retailers. The Alliance's mission is to communicate the important role of animal agriculture to our nation's economy, productivity, vitality, security and that animal well-being is central to producing safe, high-quality, affordable food and other products essential to our daily lives.