

Ractopamine Petition Introduction

For many years now, the National Health Federation has been attending the meetings in Europe (Rome and Geneva) of the Codex Alimentarius Commission. This is the international governing body that has on its agenda, among other things, the adoption of a standard for Ractopamine Maximum Residue Levels (MRLs) that is tottering on the brink of success for the pro-Ractopamine forces.

At the last Commission meeting in Geneva, Switzerland on July 4-9, 2011, the draft standard for Ractopamine MRLs nearly passed. Those who have been following this Codex debate will remember that Ractopamine is a beta-agonist (read, *steroid*) drug given to pigs and cattle to promote protein and weight gain before slaughter. This veterinary drug, developed and owned by Eli Lilly's Elanco Technology, takes nutrients away from fat production and pushes them instead into muscle, creating a leaner and more-valuable animal. While the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved this drug for animal use in 2002, three years later it sent Elanco a warning letter accusing the company of withholding critical information that had led to approval. Still, the FDA and Health Canada – for some mysterious reason – are vigorously pushing Ractopamine at Codex meetings!

Most of the World's countries (some 160 at last count) wisely do not allow ractopamine-doped meat to be sold within their borders. Especially strict is the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), which has found that Ractopamine constricts blood vessels and quickens the heart in animals and humans. EFSA and its member states have a very sensible public-health policy against drugging healthy animals just for steroid-like effects.

They also know very well – as do their counterparts in the FDA and Health Canada – that for Ractopamine to work, the drugged animals must continue to consume the drug until the very day of their slaughter. This means that there will be residues of the drug in pork and other meats for you and me to consume! This also means that just as the animals are drugged, so are you and your loved ones.

At this last meeting, the anti-Ractopamine forces won by 9 votes, barely defeating the adoption of this standard, which adoption would have spread this drug plague worldwide. The FDA and Health Canada must be stopped and the doping of American and Canadian animals that goes on right now must be stopped!

We must actively push the U.S. FDA and Health Canada to change their positions on Ractopamine both domestically and at Codex meetings. Contact the FDA and Health Canada and demand that they stop the doping of North American animals with Ractopamine and its related drugs and that the U.S. and Canadian representatives at Codex meetings back our demands when representing the North American public at Codex.

FDA Contact Information: <http://www.thenhf.com/page.php?id=122>

Health Canada Contact Information: <http://www.thenhf.com/page.php?id=319>