

Results “Terrifying” Says Slaughter

WASHINGTON – Congresswoman Louise Slaughter (NY-28) today reacted to findings from a Consumer Reports survey that [revealed widespread bacteria found on pork samples throughout the United States](#). The study, released this morning, found the bacteria “yersinia enterocolitica” in 69 percent of tested pork samples. Most of the bacteria found were resistant to multiple drugs or classes of drugs. The report also found that about one-fifth of pork samples harbored low levels of the drug “ractopamine,” which is used in the United States to promote growth and leanness in pigs, but is banned for use in the European Union, China and Taiwan.

"Today's findings are simply terrifying," said Slaughter. "It's getting harder and harder for the food processing industry and the FDA to ignore the fact that the overuse of antibiotics in animals is threatening public health. Their half-measures and voluntary guidelines are no longer enough - we must act swiftly to reverse this public health crisis. I have legislation awaiting a vote in Congress to address this problem once and for all- and it's time we pass it into law."

Rep. Slaughter is the author of the Preservation of Antibiotics for Medical Treatment Act (PAMTA), which would end the routine use of antibiotics on healthy animals and curb the growing threat of superbugs. PAMTA would preserve the effectiveness of medically important antibiotics by phasing out the use of these drugs in healthy food-producing animals, while allowing their use for treatment of sick animals. PAMTA has 92 co-sponsors in the House of Representatives.

Every year, two million Americans acquire bacterial infections during their hospital stay, and nearly 100,000 Americans die from them. Seventy percent of these infections are resistant to the drugs commonly used to treat them. In February, the Translational Genomics Research Institute published a study that [conclusively links the routine use of antibiotics in food-animal production to deadly, antibiotic-resistant MRSA that can infect humans](#). This hard evidence left no doubt that the routine misuse of antibiotics on food-production animals threatens public health.

In July, Slaughter released a ground-breaking survey of the food industry's practices when it comes to antibiotic use. The survey found that while a small number of industry leaders provide antibiotic-free meat and poultry products, an overwhelming majority of food production companies routinely feed low doses of antibiotics to healthy food-animals.

[To view full survey results, and information about the survey, click here.](#)

Decades of research have shown that the routine misuse of antibiotics leads to an increase in superbugs. In 2011, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration confirmed that 80 percent of all antibiotics used in the United States are used not on humans but on food-animals, most of

which are perfectly healthy.

[For more on PAMTA and Slaughter's work to address superbugs, click here.](#)