



PEOPLE FOR  
THE ETHICAL  
TREATMENT  
OF ANIMALS

April 14, 2020

David MacLennan, CEO  
Cargill

Dear Mr. MacLennan,

After learning that Cargill has shut down a meat-packing plant in Hazleton, Pennsylvania, after 164 employees were taken ill with COVID-19, I'm writing with an urgent, lifesaving suggestion: Will you please not only help flatten the health crisis curve, but get ahead of the consumer curve by carving out a new business model that modernizes your company? It means shutting down meat production permanently, and making the transition to producing only vegan meat, something an increasing number of people are turning to and that will soar in market demand. PETA will chip in to defray the cost of retraining your employees.

Filthy factory farms threaten the health of everyone—not just workers and consumers of meat—by providing a breeding ground for deadly diseases. Mad cow disease (spongiform encephalopathy) came from spinal cords cut out at slaughter. Swine flu—which originated in farmed pigs—has killed hundreds of thousands of people worldwide. Likewise, bird flu can easily spread on a crowded chicken farm. Now, while the world is battling the current pandemic—which originated in a meat market—it's crucial that we each do our part, and that includes Smithfield, to make positive changes that will help prevent future outbreaks and protect people around the world.

Working on a kill floor has always been a dangerous and dirty job. Staff must keep up with absurdly fast slaughter speeds, and witness and participate in truly revolting practices, such as killing petrified cows and pigs. Now they have to worry about becoming infected with COVID-19.

Cargill is already planning on producing some vegan meats, so while the writing is on the wall, please start producing *only* vegan meats, which would support human health, the environment, and, of course, animals.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Very truly yours,

Ingrid E. Newkirk  
President

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