

December 16, 2020

The Honorable Daniella Levine Cava  
Mayor of Miami-Dade County

Dear Mayor Levine Cava:

I'm writing on behalf of PETA Latino and our millions of members and supporters worldwide, including many across Florida, with wishes for continued good health. We'd also like to ask that you please honor your Latino constituents by continuing the annual Nochebuena pig pardon established by former mayor Carlos Giménez. Perhaps as Covid cases continue to surge, you could consider hosting a virtual ceremony this year or instead declare December 24 "Save a Pig" Day.

As you probably know, pigs are intelligent, sensitive animals who feel joy and pain and form strong bonds with others. Nonetheless, nearly all of the millions of them who are killed for food in the U.S. every year are raised on crowded, filthy factory farms where they're subjected to extreme crowding and routine mutilations, such as castration and ear-notching—without any pain relief—before they're sent on a terrifying trip to the slaughterhouse. Their deaths are not quick or painless.

While the Nochebuena ceremony spares only two pigs, every person who pledges to "pardon" all pigs this year will do a good and kind thing.

Avoiding lechón asado is also better for all your constituents' health. Studies have shown that Latinos experience higher rates of obesity and chronic conditions such as type 2 diabetes, both of which have been linked to meat consumption. And at a time when many of us are facing financial uncertainty, nutrient-rich vegan foods free of dietary cholesterol and low in saturated fat, such as yuca and frijoles negros dormidos, are inexpensive items that can also save money on health-care costs in the long run.

With more than a million cases of COVID-19 diagnosed in Florida alone and as the world faces an enormous loss of life, it's more important than ever to recognize the public health risks associated with consuming animals and animal-derived products. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that 75% of

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recently emerged infectious diseases in humans began in other animals. In addition to COVID-19, deadly outbreaks of swine flu (which originated on U.S. pig farms), avian flu, mad cow disease, SARS, and other zoonotic diseases have resulted from using animals for food, and the next pandemic is not a matter of *if* but *when*.

We hope you'll continue the tradition of pardoning pigs before Nochebuena. We could assist with rescuing the pigs from a slaughterhouse and finding them a new home, and we'd be honored to partner with you by donating vegan ham roasts to nearby schools or homeless shelters in need. Thank you for your consideration. We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Gabriel Ochoa  
Assistant Manager  
PETA Latino