

Animal Health Institute
Making Food Safer: Examining the Role of Animal Medicines
November 3, 2011

Opening Remarks by Alex Mathews, President and CEO, Animal Health Institute

Before we get started, I want to extend a very special and warm welcome to our keynote speaker, U.S. Congressman Dennis Cardoza. Also joining us today to moderate the panel discussion is Philip Brasher of Gannett News Service, along with our esteemed panel: Sarah Klein of the Center for Science and the Public Interest, Dr. Beth Krysinski with Mount Air Farms, Dr. Guy Loneragan of Texas Tech University, Andrew Murphy of Innovative Livestock Services, and Dr. Hilary Thesmar with the Food Marketing Institute. Mr. Brasher will introduce the panel in greater detail a little later in the program.

Now what you may know, AHI represents companies that make a variety of medicines for animals. Now these medicines range in application from flea and tick control for your dog or cat to cutting-edge cancer treatments to medicines that prevent parasites in swine. These important milestones have helped to both treat and prevent diseases in animals, and have enabled humans to live in close proximity to animals. Our mission, quite simply, is to improve the health and wellbeing of animals, and in doing so, we also protect and improve the health and wellbeing of humans. For more than two years now, AHI has also led a successful education campaign, Healthy People, Healthy Animals, Healthy Planet, to engage stakeholders in the fields of animal health, agriculture, and public health, with the intent to eliminate diseases at the nexus of animal and human health.

Today's discussion on making food safer has long been top of mind for consumers and has been a topic of frequent debate among public and animal health organizations alike. We brought together this program today to help further the discussion from farm to Capitol Hill and examine how we are working together on these important issues. And we look forward to providing an informative discussion and engaging panels about what steps are being taken to protect public health and contribute to a safer food supply.

Following the keynote address and panel discussion, we will provide an opportunity for those in the audience to ask questions of the panel. And to get things started, I would like to introduce our keynote speaker today, Congressman Dennis Cardoza, who represents California's 18th congressional district, and current serves as the ranking member of the agriculture committee and subcommittee on livestock, dairy, and poultry, where he is a leader in tackling and solving issues that have plagued dairy producers and the industry in recent years. Prior to that, Representative Cardoza served as chairman of the House agriculture committee and subcommittee on horticulture and organic agriculture, which had a leading role in the formation of the 2007 farm bill. Thank you again for being here. I will now turn it over to Congressman Cardoza.