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State of California State Water Resources Control Board DIVISION OF WATER RIGHTS,
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Regarding:

From: noreply@salesforce.com on behalf of Complaint Site Guest User
To: ara@sequoiaforestkeeper.org
Subject: Thank you for submitting an environmental complaint
Date: Thursday, June 6, 2019 3:51:59 PM

Dear Ara Marderosian,
The California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA) received your complaint on 6/6/2019. Your complaint will be referred to the appropriate agency for investigation. Your complaint tracking number is COMP-43436.

We hereby submit the following additional Supplement to the complaint 43436 to the SWRCB concerning the use of water owned and controlled by the State of California on land owned by the State of California to produce livestock (via leasing of land, grass, and associated onsite spring surface water sources to a private rancher for cattle grazing and cattle watering purposes). The land and related natural resources in question are administered by the California State Lands Commission and legally delineated in Lease PRC 4565.2.

This CalEPA complaint, COMP-43436, is not a water rights complaint: it is a water policy complaint that addresses the long-term water impairment, water contamination, and water loss due to California's water, because water is being used for livestock watering, washing, and feeding. This policy complaint also addresses the impacts to climate because SWRCB enables California's water to be used for livestock, which produce methane that pollutes the atmosphere and changes the global climate.

Below is an article with citations to the relevant science, which CalEPA should consider in an open hearing on water policy, that assesses the impacts to the environment from the use of California's water for livestock. In addition to causing air pollution and climate change, the science and article shown below indicate livestock are causing antibiotic resistant bacteria, Livestock-Associated Staphylococcus aureus, and other diseases, all of which constitute the unreasonable uses of California's water per the California Constitution.

The Covid-19 pandemic shows we must transform the global food system

Our global, profit-driven, meat-centered food system is making us sick. We need a radical rethink

Jan Dutkiewicz, [Astra Taylor](#) and Troy Vettese

Thu 16 Apr 2020 08.35 EDT

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2020/apr/16/coronavirus-covid-19-pandemic-food-animals#img-1>



'Individually, we must stop eating animal products. Collectively, we must transform the global food system and work toward ending animal agriculture.' Photograph: Daniel Acker/Bloomberg/Getty Images

It was bats. Or pangolins. To hear common narratives about the origins of Covid-19, there is a simple causal relationship between China's consumption of wild animals and the coronavirus ravaging the globe.

Dr Anthony Fauci, the United States' top epidemiologist, [told](#) Fox: "It boggles my mind how when we have so many diseases that emanate out of that unusual human-animal interface, that we don't just shut it down." His opinion echoes a growing chorus across the political spectrum that singles out China's so-called "wet markets" as the culprit for the pandemic. The Republican senator Lindsey Graham has [called](#) the Chinese exotic animal trade "disgusting" and conservationist Jane Goodall has [called](#) for "a global ban".

Science and political economy, however, tell a more complex story. The principal driver of zoonotic diseases (such as the virus Sars-Cov-2, which spread from animals to humans) is industrial animal agriculture. When food production encroaches on wild habitats, it creates opportunities for pathogens to jump to livestock and humans. Industrial agriculture also breeds its own diseases, like swine flu and avian flu, on hellish factory farms. And it contributes to antibiotic resistance and climate change, both of which exacerbate the problem.

We need to have an honest public discussion on how to produce our food. Individually, we must stop eating animal products. Collectively, we must transform the global food system and work toward ending animal agriculture and rewilding much of the world. Oddly, many people who would never challenge the reality of climate change refuse to acknowledge the role meat-eating plays in endangering public health. Eating meat, it seems, is a socially acceptable form of science denial.

Researchers have long issued warnings about the consequences of our livestock-dominated food system. After the Sars outbreak in 2003, an essay in the American Journal of Public Health [lamented](#) that "changing the way humans treat animals – most basically, ceasing to eat them or, at the very least, radically limiting the quantity of them that are eaten – is largely off the radar as a significant preventive measure." In 2016, the UN Environment Program warned that the ["livestock revolution"](#) was a zoonotic disaster waiting to happen [see pgs. 18-30].

Yet meat consumption continues to rise. Now, just as experts predicted, eating animals is [coming back to bite us](#).

Xenophobes call Covid-19 the "Wuhan virus", but in reality zoonoses emerge worldwide, and do so with increasing regularity. The 1918 "Spanish flu" probably [came from](#) a midwestern pig farm. In the 1990s, ecological destabilization in the US south-west led to the Four Corners hantavirus outbreak. The Hendra and Menangle viruses are named after Australian towns. The Reston virus is an Ebola strain named after a DC suburb. Marburg virus emerged in Germany. These last two diseases sprang from monkeys imported for laboratory use – the Chinese are not the only ones with a large and dangerous wildlife trade. Sars, Mers and Zika are only three of many novel zoonoses to strike in the new millennium.

Fauci, Graham and Goodall's call for a clampdown on the "exotic" animal trade is a valid demand, but ignores how that industry is inextricably intertwined with "conventional" food

production. The Chinese government has encouraged smallholders [to breed and procure wild game](#) to compensate for losing market-share to large livestock firms. Similarly, reliance on “bush meat” in west Africa increased after local fishers were pushed out of coastal waters by foreign trawlers in the 1970s, leading to the outbreaks of HIV and Ebola. The problem isn’t some people’s taste for seemingly strange delicacies, but rather our global, profit-driven, meat-centered food system.

Just as zoonotic threats are multiplying, combating them is becoming harder. Antibiotics are increasingly ineffective in part because commercial livestock farmers abuse them, hoping to speed up growth rates or as a prophylactic measure against the spread of disease on overcrowded factory farms. Overuse of antibiotics spurs the evolution of “super-bugs” like MRSA, a flesh-eating bacterium now found at hospitals worldwide. Modern solutions, like viral cures and vaccines, are elusive. The World Health Organization [reported](#) that the most important techniques for controlling the 2003 Sars outbreak were not cutting-edge medicines so much as “19th-century public health strategies of contact tracing, quarantine, and isolation”. This has also been the case with Covid-19.

Our short-term priority is the development of a vaccine for Covid-19. But we must also start thinking about more radical measures to address the roots of this crisis. We need a more resilient food system that puts less stress on the planet and on public health.

This requires three interventions. The first is ending subsidies to industrial animal agriculture and taxing animal products to incorporate the cost of environmental and public health externalities, with the aim of the industry’s eventual abolition.

The second is support for local, sustainable plant farming to replace the monocrop-focused status quo. We must relieve pressure on soil and wildlife while creating better, safer agricultural jobs. (We should also remember that meatpacking workers, like their peers in wet markets, tend to be the first exposed to new pathogens.)

The third is large-scale, public-directed investment in both plant-based meat alternatives and cellular agriculture (ie, growing animal tissue from stem cells), which would expand scientific research and employment while spurring a transition to animal-free protein.

The post-meat age will be a healthier one. Between farming, ranching and feed crops, the livestock industry gobbles up 40% of the world’s habitable surface. A vegan food system would require a tenth as much land. Restoring the natural environment could also create jobs through a public works program akin to the New Deal’s Civilian Conservation Corps. And it would reduce the outbreak of new epidemics by reducing contact between humans and wild animals and by restoring biodiversity.

Old habits *can* change. In the last few weeks, as the coronavirus has spread and millions shelter in place, bean sales have [surged](#). People, it seems, are willing to eat legumes if it’s part of a public health effort. When this pandemic ends they’ll need to keep doing just that, lest a more lethal disaster comes to pass.

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- Astra Taylor is the author, most recently, of Democracy May Not Exist, but We'll Miss It When It's Gone
- Troy Vettese is an environmental historian and a William Lyon Mackenzie King research fellow at Harvard University

America faces an epic choice ... in the coming year, and the results will define the country for a generation. These are perilous times.

Sincerely,

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