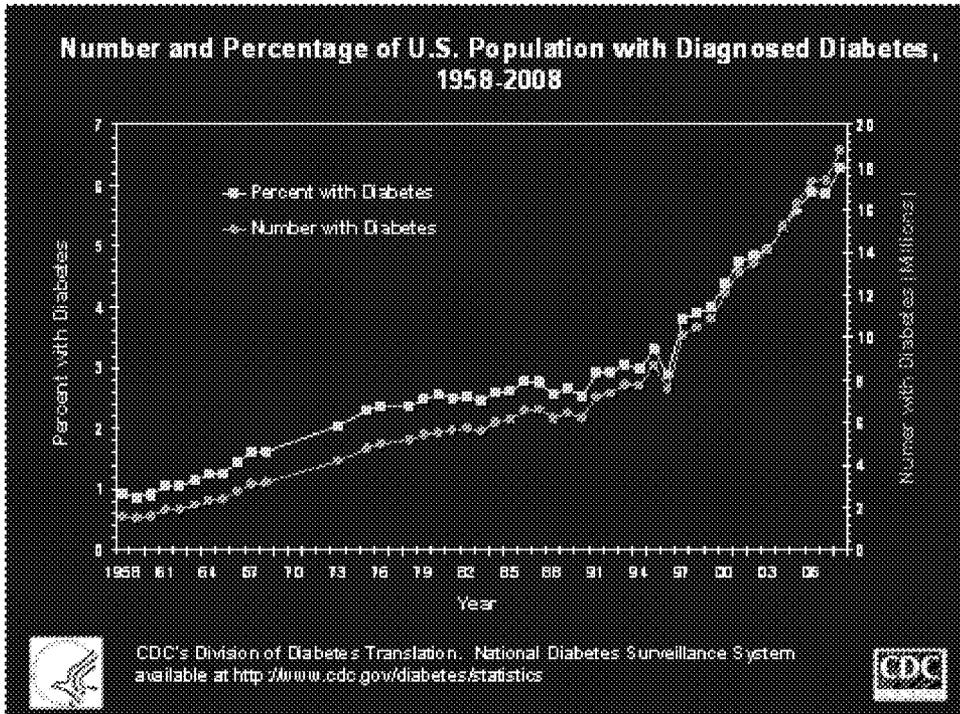


From: jean&pablo mendoza <jmen@bentonrea.com>
Sent: Friday, December 25, 2009 8:18 PM
To: ATR-Agricultural Workshops <agriculturalworkshops@usdoj.gov>
Subject: Comment



Dear Policy Makers:

I am a long time critical care nurse, currently a nurse educator and also a farm girl from the Yakima Valley in Washington State. It appears to me that city dwellers may not know some of the activities transpiring in farm country and how this affects their health. Agricultural policies have been changing over the past 20 years. Most dairy cows and swine are now raised in confined areas where forage is brought to them and waste is scraped or flushed away for storage until it can be spread on crop land as fertilizer. Because these animals live in such close proximity they are more prone to infection and contagious disease. Over 60% of pharmaceutical drugs currently produced in the United States are now used in agriculture.

In 1991 the United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved the use of trenbolone acetate, an anabolic steroid, and estradiol, a sex steroid, for use in implants to increase rate of weight gain and improve feed efficiency of cattle. In 1999 more than 96% of all cattle in feedlots were implanted at least once. (NAHMS, 2000) (Shceffler, et al, 2009). In 1993 the FDA approved the use of recombinant bovine growth hormone (rBGH) to increase milk production in U.S. dairy cows. "The available evidence documents adverse health effects from rBGH on cows. The evidence for potential harm to humans is inconclusive." (ACS, 2009)

Although proponents of these policies claim that there is no correlation, the diabetes rate for people living in the United States has increased dramatically since these changes in food production were introduced. In 1990 about 2.8% or 7 million people had diabetes.

In 2008 about 6.5% or 18.5 million people had diabetes, according to the Center for Disease Control (2009). The most recent number is 24 million Americans with diabetes. There are similar increases for obesity and related health conditions. For those of us who are closely connected to the earth, it is sad to learn that salmon are now showing gender reversal in the Yakima and Columbia Rivers.

Thanks for reading.

Jean Mendoza

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