

PETA's letter to Gov. John Baldacci follows.

February 21, 2008

The Honorable John Baldacci

The Governor of Maine

1 page via fax: 207-287-1034

Dear Governor Baldacci:

On behalf of PETA and our more than 1.8 million members and supporters, I'm writing to thank you for Maine's efforts as it struggles alongside California to push the Environmental Protection Agency for tighter vehicle-emission standards. The fight against global warming is critical, and vehicle emissions are a key part of the problem. But by focusing on the cars that we drive, you're missing an even more critical piece of the climate puzzle: the food that we eat. By establishing programs to encourage Maine residents to switch to a vegetarian diet, you'll make a far bigger dent in global warming than you would by lowering vehicle-emission standards.

Please consider the following:

- A 2006 United Nations report determined that raising animals for food generates almost 40 percent more greenhouse gases than all the cars, trucks, SUVs, ships and planes in the world *combined*. The report went on to say that the meat industry is "one of the ... most significant contributors to the most serious environmental problems, at every scale from local to global" and recommends that the meat industry "be a major policy focus when dealing with problems of land degradation, climate change and air pollution, water shortage and water pollution, and loss of biodiversity."
- A 2006 University of Chicago study found that adopting a vegan diet reduces a person's greenhouse gas emissions more than switching from a standard American car to a Toyota Prius.
- According to Environmental Defense, if every American substituted vegetarian food for one chicken meal per week, the carbon dioxide savings would be about the same as taking more than half a

million cars off U.S. roads.

- The official handbook for Live Earth, the anti-global warming concerts that Al Gore helped organize, says that not eating meat is the "*single most effective thing you can do*" to reduce your climate change impact. (Emphasis in original.)

I urge you to immediately convene an executive panel of top nutrition experts and environmentalists to devise programs to encourage Maine residents to switch to a vegetarian diet. Because vegetarians are less prone to heart disease, diabetes, and obesity than meat-eaters, this would also be a boon to your citizens' health. A great way to start would be to announce that the menu at all official state dinners will be exclusively vegetarian. PETA would of course be happy to put your staff in touch with vegetarian chefs who can help you create delicious gourmet meals.

Please contact me at 757-943-7456 or LindsayR@peta.org <<mailto:LindsayR@peta.org>> to let me know of your plans. Thank you for recognizing the urgency of this issue.

Sincerely,

Lindsay Rajt

Assistant Manager

Factory Farming Campaigns