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May 11, 2005

Right Hon. Paul Martin, Prime Minister
House of Commons
Parliament Buildings
Ottawa, Ontario
Canada
K1A 0A6

Dear Prime Minister Martin,

Re: Independent and public investigation into Health Canada's firing of Shiv Chopra, Margaret Haydon and Gerald Lambert is required.

On July 14, 2004, three scientists in the Veterinary Drugs Directorate, Shiv Chopra, Margaret Haydon and Gerard Lambert, were fired by Health Canada.

These three scientists have become known as whistle-blowers as a result of their prolonged efforts to publicly raise awareness of various products and practices of questionable safety. Their objections to the approval of the genetically modified cow growth hormone (rBGH) to enhance milk production was the key factor in stopping this drug from being used in Canada.

They drew attention to Canada's beef sector BSE risk (mad cow disease) and called for better prevention measures years ago; opposed approval of various antibiotics for use in animal feed which leads to the development of antibiotic resistant bacteria; opposed approval of hormones as growth-promoters that are banned in Europe and linked to the development of cancer.

Many Canadians, including ourselves, are deeply concerned that these firings were unjust, politically motivated due to pressure from pharmaceutical companies, and an attempt to silence legitimate objections to the approval of feed and drugs that pose a danger to Canadians' health.

Therefore, we call upon you to ensure that the House of Commons immediately commences an independent and public investigation into Health Canada's firing of Shiv Chopra, Margaret Haydon and Gerald Lambert and their longstanding complaints against Health Canada management about the pressure to approve or maintain drugs of questionable safety in food-producing animals.

Sincerely,

Signed:

Beyond Factory Farming Coalition
Canadian Health Coalition
Canadian Organic Growers
Council of Canadians
Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE)
National Farmers Union
Union Paysanne
B.C. Coalition for Alternatives to Pesticides
B.C. Nurses Union
Backyard Farmers Association
BC Food Systems Network
Canadian Action Party
Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment
Certified Organic Associations of BC
Citizens for the Environment and Future in Eastern Ontario
Coalition of Concerned Citizens of Huron-Kinloss
Coalition Rurale du Haut St Laurent
Communication Energy and Paperworkers (CEP) Union
Community Action for Justice Coalition
Community Association for Responsible Development
Comox Valley Chapter, Council of Canadians
Comox Valley Social Planning Society
Concerned Citizens for a Safe and Healthy Environment
Concerned Residents of Winnipeg (CROW) Inc.
Eatkind.net
Edmonton Small Press Association (ESPA)
Ford Alward Naturalist Association
Forum de l'Institut des sciences de l'environnement de l'UQÀM
GE Alert
Greenesmiths Farm
Greenpeace Canada
Hogwatch Haldimand
Islands Organic Producers Association

Kelly Creek Organic Growers
Kootenay Organic Growers Society
l'Association de biodynamie du Québec
LifeCycles Project Society
Linking Land And Future Farmers
Little River Pond Mills and Environmental Management
L'organisme les AmiEs de la Terre de l'Estrie
Moose Jaw Chapter, Council of Canadians
North shore Chapter, Council of Canadians
Ontario Public Interest Research Group - Kingston
Ontario Public Interest Research Group - McMaster
Ontario Public Interest Research Group - Ottawa
Ontario Public Interest Research Group - Windsor
Organic Food Council of Manitoba
Ottawa-Carleton Wildlife Centre
Peterborough and Kawarthas Chapter, Council of Canadians
Polaris Institute
Powell River Agriculture Association
Powell River Farmers' Institute
Quill Lakes Watch Group
Saskatchewan Federation of Labour
Saskatchewan Health Coalition
Saskatchewan Organic Certification Association Inc.
Saskatchewan Organic Producers Association
Sierra Club of Canada
Sludgwatch
Small Planet Whole Foods
SOS Eau Water Sankwan
Stop the Hogs Coalition
SunRoot Eco-Solidarity Association
Sunset Solar Systems Ltd.
T. Buck Suzuki Environmental Foundation
The Coalition of Concerned Citizens of Huron-Kinloss
The David Orchard Campaign for Canada
The Ram's Horn
Turning the Tide Bookstore, Saskatoon
University of Saskatchewan Environmental Studies Students Association
Vancouver Humane Society