

**IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**OCTOBER 5, 1998**

**SENATE HEARINGS COULD LEAD TO CANADIAN BAN  
ON GROWTH HORMONE**

GANANOQUE, Ont.—"The upcoming Senate hearings on rBGH may prove pivotal, not only in the possibility of a Canadian ban on the drug, but also in determining whether Canada's Health Protection Agency serves the Canadian public or drug manufacturers," said NFU Region 3 (Ontario) Coordinator Peter Dowling.

The Senate Standing Committee on Agriculture and Forestry had planned to hold hearing last week on the subject of recombinant bovine growth hormone and its approval in Canada.

Six scientists who have recently exposed inadequacies and irregularities in Health Canada's drug approval process were to testify at the hearings. These scientists have become so uncomfortable with the situation that they have asked the Deputy Minister at Health Canada for a letter guaranteeing that there will be no recriminations resulting from their testimony at the Senate hearings.

Four science reviewers have also produced a report on the shortcomings of Health Canada's investigation into the safety of rBGH: "Gaps Analysis" report. That report is posted on the NFU's website at <[www.nfu.ca](http://www.nfu.ca)>.

Senate committee hearings are an important opportunity for the public to find out more about rBGH and the issues surrounding that controversial, genetically engineered veterinary hormone. The hearing will also shed some light on systemic problems within Health Canada—problems such as the tainted blood scandal, silicone breast implants, the veterinary drug Revalor-H, and the human heart drug nifedipine.

"Health Canada seems to have lost sight of its mission to safeguard the health and safety of Canadians. Instead, it seems increasingly pre-occupied with servicing its corporate "clients"—approving veterinary and prescription drugs according to the wishes and timetables of those drugs' manufacturers," concluded Dowling.

The NFU has been seeking a ban on rBGH in Canada since 1988, citing outstanding human and animal health issues, and consumer rejection of the synthetic hormone technology.

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