



Investors Challenge Sanderson Farms to Address Antibiotic-Resistant “Superbugs”

Investment groups worth \$46 billion sign letter supporting As You Sow’s proposal

Oakland, CA – September 13, 2017 – Investors filed a [shareholder proposal](#) today with Sanderson Farms, the third-largest U.S. poultry producer, and announced an [open letter](#) from groups worth \$46 billion. The proposal is led by non-profit shareholder group [As You Sow](#) and co-filed by [Oxfam America](#), and will be voted on at the company’s Annual Shareholder Meeting next February. The proposal requests that Sanderson Farms cease using medically important antibiotics for disease prevention in healthy poultry. Unnecessary antibiotic use is contributing to the global health crisis of antibiotic resistant bacteria (“superbugs”).

Antibiotic resistance is projected to cause [300 million premature deaths and up to \\$100 trillion in global economic damage by 2050. This problem](#) has become a major priority of global health groups like the [United Nations](#) and the [World Health Organization](#).

“Sanderson Farms cannot ignore science forever,” said Austin Wilson, Environmental Health Manager at *As You Sow*. “Investors are increasingly concerned about antibiotic overuse and the havoc it can wreak in human medicine and in livestock operations. That’s why one-third of the company’s shares supported our proposal last year, and we expect to see a majority vote this year.”

Sanderson is the only large U.S. chicken producer that has not committed to restrict its use of medically important antibiotics. The company has [publicly stated](#) that “there is not any credible science that leads us to believe we’re causing antibiotic resistance in humans,” ignoring the [fundamental principle](#) that antibiotic use breeds resistant bacteria, which is recognized by every major medical authority.

“Action by other major producers to reduce antibiotic use or move away from medically important antibiotics only serves to highlight Sanderson’s head-in-the-sand attitude,” said Wilson.

As You Sow filed a similar shareholder proposal with Sanderson Farms in 2016, which was [supported by 31.5% of shares](#).

As You Sow has [worked successfully with restaurant companies like Wendy’s, Burger King, and McDonald’s](#) to create proactive policies to reduce antibiotic use in chicken.

One of Sanderson Farms’ primary competitors, Perdue Foods, raises 95% of its chickens without any use of antibiotics, crediting this success to improved diet and animal husbandry, a win-win for consumers, workers, and the Company.

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As You Sow is a nonprofit organization that promotes environmental and social corporate responsibility through shareholder advocacy, coalition building, and innovative legal strategies.