



Dear Whole Foods Leadership,

We write to express our deep concern regarding the significant animal welfare problems and public health risks associated with the continued use of Frankenchickens in your company's supply chain, contrary to your pledge to stop sourcing meat from these birds by 2024. While Whole Foods positions itself as a pioneer in ethical and high-quality food, it regrettably still capitalizes on inhumane and irresponsible breeding practices that the company itself has acknowledged need urgent attention.

Frankenchickens are chickens who have been bred to grow unnaturally large abnormally fast to produce as much meat as possible in the least time. This breeding practice causes serious welfare issues, and these very young chickens often suffer from lameness, heart disease, and organ failure. Many birds struggle to walk or hold themselves up long enough to reach food and water.

Selective breeding for unnaturally rapid growth also causes Frankenchickens to suffer from weakened immune systems. Coupled with the detrimental management issues typical of industrialized poultry production, this makes the birds highly susceptible to avian influenza and other deadly diseases. When outbreaks occur, millions of chickens are cruelly killed en masse, leading to immense suffering, food waste, and economic losses. Scientists have warned that factory farms provide ideal conditions for viruses to mutate rapidly and jump between species and that avian influenza is a prime candidate for triggering the next human pandemic. Despite these risks, Whole Foods continues to prioritize profit over animal and public health, benefiting from a broken system that puts birds at a higher risk for disease.

Additionally, Frankenchickens' abnormal growth contributes to high rates of muscle diseases, the effects of which are often visible to the naked eye in chicken meat. One easy way to spot meat from Frankenchickens is to look for "white striping," thin white lines of fat across breast meat. A new Mercy For Animals report reveals evidence of white striping in chicken meat found at 100% of the 88 Whole Foods locations recently surveyed across 52 U.S. and six Canadian cities, a clear sign of your company's continued reliance on cruel breeding practices.

As healthcare providers, we join Mercy For Animals in amplifying this critical issue and imploring Whole Foods to follow through on its pledge to ban Frankenchickens from its operations. Your company must take action in the name of animal welfare and public health and do its part in creating a healthier world for all.

Sincerely,

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