



October 17, 2016

Mr. Mariano Lozano  
The Dannon Company Inc.  
100 Hillside Ave Floor 3  
White Plains, New York 10603-2863

Dear Mr. Lozano:

As leaders of major U.S. farm organizations, we are writing to express our deep concern and great dismay with your company's attack on the livelihood and integrity of our farmers that is contained in the recently released "Dannon Pledge." Under the guise of providing consumers more choices, your pledge would force farmers to abandon safe, sustainable farming practices that have enhanced farm productivity over the last 20 years while greatly reducing the carbon footprint of American agriculture.

Though touted with great fanfare as a corporate commitment to sustainability and environmental improvement, in reality the Dannon Pledge amounts to a major step backward in truly sustainable food production. Indeed, the reason the vast majority of American farmers grow crops improved with biotechnology is precisely because these crops are more sustainable than the ones they used to grow.

We doubt that informed consumers want to see an increase in insecticide applications that will be needed to fulfill your pledge. Conventional crops grown before the advent of agricultural biotechnology required extensive and intensive pesticide use, pesticides that your pledge would force farmers to return to using. We also doubt that consumers are clamoring for the increases in water and fossil fuel use, as well as increased soil erosion that would be brought on by more frequent trips across the fields with cultivation equipment to grow the crops to meet your pledge. Nor do we think consumers who care deeply about how their food is grown want to bring more land into cultivation to make up for the loss in crop yields.

In short, the Dannon pledge is the exact opposite of the sustainable agriculture that you claim to be seeking.

In our view your pledge amounts to marketing flimflam, pure and simple. It appears to be an attempt to gain lost sales from your competitors by using fear-based marketing and trendy buzzwords, not through any actual improvement in your products. Such disingenuous tactics and marketing puffery are certainly not becoming a company as well-known and respected as Dannon. Neither farmers nor consumers should be used as pawns in food marketing wars.

We strongly support open, honest and transparent engagement with consumers, and the right of consumers to make informed choices about the products they buy. But we are troubled by the disingenuous approach embodied in the Dannon pledge. We doubt that you would discard years of productivity improvements by returning to 1990s computer technology to run your business, or revert to 20-year old transportation, processing or packaging tools. Why then, when you repeatedly

acknowledge the well-established science affirming the safety of agricultural biotechnology, would you require farmers to go back to old, inefficient and less effective cropping practices?

On behalf of our farmer members, who represent the vast majority of American agriculture, we respectfully request that you revise the Dannon pledge to recognize the sustainability, safety and environmental benefit of food biotechnology. We would welcome the opportunity to discuss this matter with you further and to offer our assistance in developing truly meaningful measurements of agricultural sustainability that will honestly and accurately characterize your products' ingredients.

Sincerely,



Zippy Duvall  
President  
American Farm Bureau Federation



Richard Wilkins  
President  
American Soybean Association



Galen Lee  
President  
American Sugarbeet Growers Association



Wesley Spurlock  
President  
National Corn Growers Association



Randy Mooney  
Chairman  
National Milk Producers Federation



Nancy Kavazanjian  
Chairperson  
U.S. Farmers and Ranchers Alliance