



PEOPLE FOR  
THE ETHICAL  
TREATMENT  
OF ANIMALS

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The Honorable William D. Dar, Ph.D.  
Secretary  
Department of Agriculture

Dear Secretary Dar,

I'm writing to you with an urgent message from People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA), a charity dedicated to helping animals.

While the trajectory of the COVID-19 pandemic remains unpredictable, one thing is certain: Live-animal markets will continue to put the health of all Filipinos at enormous risk. On behalf of PETA and our international affiliates' more than 6.5 million members and supporters worldwide, we respectfully ask that you call for the immediate and permanent closure of these markets—in which dangerous viruses and other pathogens flourish—in the Philippines.

Deadly outbreaks of swine flu, avian flu, SARS, HIV, Ebola, hoof-and-mouth disease, mad cow disease, and other maladies have come from using animals for food. Live-animal markets are perfect breeding grounds for diseases, which can jump from various other species to humans, since stressed, injured, and sickly animals are commonly caged in public areas and on sidewalks—where feces, blood, and offal can contaminate buyers and sellers and be tracked into restaurants or homes.

While some live-animal markets in China have closed, many continue to operate throughout Asia, including in the Philippines. Markets like the Balintawak Public Market and Farmers Market are another Wuhan in the making and should be closed and never allowed to reopen.

If we're to prevent future pandemics, we must heed the warning of top coronavirus researchers such as Dr. Danielle Anderson, scientific director of the world-renowned Duke-NUS Medical School in Singapore, and cut them off at the source. We urge the Department of Agriculture to close all live-animal markets in the Philippines immediately in order to prevent the next outbreak.

We look forward to hearing from you soon. Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or would like further information.

Yours truly,

Jason Baker  
Senior Vice President of International Campaigns

Affiliates:

- PETA U.S.
- PETA India
- PETA Germany
- PETA Netherlands
- PETA Foundation (U.K.)