KRISTEN BELL

January 23, 2013

Neil Dierks, CEO National Pork Producers Council 10664 Justin Dr Urbandale, IA 50322

Dear Mr. Dierks,

I've felt a strong affinity for animals my entire life. I remember wondering at a young age why we made such a dramatic distinction between the dogs we loved and the animals who live on farms. Now that I am starting a family myself, I've become even more concerned with the way we as a society treat those who are at our mercy. More specifically, as I've become more educated about the way we treat pigs who are raised for food, I've become more convinced than ever that we must make a change toward a more humane world.

I'm referring to the way most pigs are bred in this country. As you of course know: while pregnant, the vast majority of breeding pigs used by the pork industry are confined to gestation crates: tiny cages that are just about as wide and long as the pigs' own bodies, preventing these poor animals from even being able to turn around. Just before they give birth, they're transferred to another – almost identical – cage. After some time in that cage, they are re-impregnated and then put back into a gestation crate for many more months. This cycle repeats for the animals' entire lives, adding up to years on end of being basically immobilized inside dark warehouses.

I love being pregnant, but I can't imagine how awful it would be under conditions like these.

Regardless of what our individual diets might be, one thing all Americans can agree on is that pigs deserve better than these gestation crates. They're cruel, inhumane, and totally out of whack with people's values about how we ought to treat animals.

As you know, my friends at The Humane Society of the United States are working hard to change this cruel system. They've helped pass laws in nine states now to outlaw gestation crates. And with their help, some of the country's largest food companies—McDonald's, Burger King, Wendy's, Costco, Kroger, Safeway and many more—announced last year that they will eliminate gestation crates from their pork supply chains.

As I'm about to become a mother myself, I must pause and reflect on how poorly the pork industry treats the mother pigs who supply the industry with its profits—a steady stream of piglets. I hope that you'll reflect on this as well, and join The Humane Society of the United States in its efforts to bring about a more humane existence for all animals, including millions of pigs, by ensuring the timely phase-out of gestation crates from the pork industry.

Kind regards,

Kristen Bell