

PhysiciansCommittee

for Responsible Medicine

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Joseph Finley and Craig Stein
1050 IronPigs Way
Allentown, PA 18109

Dear Mr. Finley and Mr. Stein:

Congratulations on the start of the 2015 season. To continue our discussion from last year, I am writing to ask that you introduce a new mascot—Brock Lee, the broccoli spear—who will encourage fans to stay healthy and move bacon off their plates.

Championing vegetables could not come at a better time: Research shows that 89 percent of Americans fall short on daily vegetable consumption, with the average Pennsylvanian consuming only 1.5 servings per day. The consequences of our dietary choices are devastating our health care system.

Seven in 10 Americans now die from chronic, preventable diseases of lifestyle. In Pennsylvania alone, more than 1 million people have diabetes, while nearly 3 million suffer from hypertension. Of states who suffer from the highest rates of obesity, Pennsylvania is the only Northeastern state to crack the top 20. In Lehigh County, 63 percent of adults struggle with their weight.

Many of these health consequences result from dietary choices. Like all processed meats, bacon contains dangerously high levels of saturated fat, which has been linked to an increased risk for obesity, heart disease, and diabetes. Studies show that regular processed meat consumption increases diabetes risk by a staggering 41 percent.

Processed meat has long been linked to cancer – breast cancer, prostate cancer, bladder cancer, and most notably, colorectal cancer. Eating just two strips of bacon per day can raise the risk of colorectal cancer by 21 percent. Processed meat has been so strongly linked to cancer – Lehigh County's leading cause of death – that the World Cancer Research Fund warns that no amount is safe. Not a single strip.

But by encouraging fans to fill their plates with broccoli – filled with disease-fighting fiber, vitamins, and antioxidants – you can help them hit a home run for health. Consuming even just one additional serving of vegetables per day can reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease. Broccoli and other cruciferous vegetables also have protective effects against certain types of cancer.

So go to bat for broccoli and other healthful foods this season! Your fans need to know that if Brock Lee were in the IronPigs Pork Mascot Race with Chris P. Bacon, he would win every time.

Sincerely,



Cameron Wells, M.P.H., R.D.

Acting director of nutrition education

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