

# Subway to transition to meat raised without antibiotics

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Subway plans to switch to meat raised without antibiotics over the next several years after a coalition of advocacy groups planned to deliver petitions to the company's headquarters Thursday calling for the change.

The sandwich chain had already said this summer that it would start switching to chicken raised without [antibiotics](#) important to human medicine by next year. Now, it says it will serve chicken that receive no antibiotics starting in March 2016. It will also make the change to turkey starting sometime next year, with a transition expected to be complete within two to three years.

Pork and beef raised without antibiotics will follow within six years after that, or by 2025, the company says.

The announcement Tuesday comes as multiple groups including Natural Resources Defense Council, Friends of the Earth, the Center for Food Safety and food blogger Vani Hari had campaigned to get Subway to commit to buying meat produced without the routine use of antibiotics, and provide a timeline for doing so.

Livestock producers often give their cattle, hog and poultry antibiotics to make them grow faster and to prevent illnesses. The practice has become a public health issue, with officials saying it can lead to germs becoming resistant to drugs so that they're no longer effective in treating a particular illness in humans.

Chipotle and Panera already say they serve meat raised without antibiotics, and McDonald's said earlier this year it would make the switch for its chicken.

Kari Hamerschlag, a representative for Friends of the Earth, said a coalition of groups had notified Subway last week of their plans to deliver their petitions on Thursday to its headquarters in Milford, Connecticut, but had not heard back from the company. She said the groups have been trying to get a meeting with Subway since this summer, but that the company has not been responsive.

While other chains serve meat from animals that are given antibiotics, Hamerschlag said the groups singled out Subway because of its image and lack of transparency on the matter.

"We thought Subway was the most important one to target publicly because they claim to be this healthy [fast food restaurant](#) chain," she said.

Hamerschlag did not immediately know whether the groups would still deliver their petitions Thursday.

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