



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Daniel L. Squadron

Squadron, Kavanagh Propose New Anti-Salmonella Legislation in Wake of Largest Egg Recall In Recent History

DANIEL L. SQUADRON August 31, 2010



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Legislators: If the FDA Will Not Protect New Yorkers From Salmonella, We Will

Legislation Would Require Salmonella Vaccinations for All Eggs Produced or Sold In NYS;
Similar to Policy That Reduced Disease by More Than 95% in Britain

New York, NY—In the wake of the largest recall of eggs in history after a nationwide salmonella outbreak, State Senator Daniel Squadron and Assemblymember Brian Kavanagh joined food safety advocates today to announce legislation that will require farmers to vaccinate hens against the dangerous bacteria.

Over half a billion eggs were recalled earlier this month after contaminated eggs led to a salmonella outbreak that sickened thousands of Americans. The FDA issued new safety rules for eggs that went into effect last month but did not require salmonella vaccination of hens, even though industry experts and food safety advocates recommend the measure to protect consumers against the health threat. Salmonella vaccination by British farmers has successfully reduced the number of salmonella cases by 96 percent in England and Wales over the past decade. In the United States, approximately 142,000 people contract salmonella each year from contaminated eggs.

Senator Squadron said, "Requiring salmonella vaccination should be a no-brainer, and if the FDA is unwilling to take the lead, we should start here in New York. As a former salmonella victim, I know how important it is for consumers to trust that a trip to the supermarket for eggs won't end up landing them in the hospital. The FDA's new guidelines are a step in the right direction, but they fall short of the British approach, which includes vaccination of hens and has reduced salmonella by 95 percent in a decade."

Assemblymember Kavanagh said, "The massive outbreaks of food-borne illness in recent months leave no doubt that our food safety system is failing us, threatening everyone's health and wellbeing, and sometimes costing people's lives," said Assemblymember Kavanagh. "Getting our regulatory system in order will involve a long, complex process of developing and enforcing stronger standards in the face of inevitable industry opposition. But with respect to salmonella in eggs, we're fortunate that there is a silver bullet that has been proven in other jurisdictions to virtually eliminate the threat, literally with a single

shot. Vaccination to fight salmonella in eggs is long overdue, and we're going to make it happen in New York.”

Nancy Donley, president of the nationwide food safety advocacy organization Safe Tables Our Priority (S.T.O.P.), whose son died from E. coli poisoning in 1993, said, “S.T.O.P. represents victims of foodborne illness, many who suffer life-long health consequences because our nation’s food safety programs failed to protect them from contaminated food. This latest foodborne illness outbreak from Salmonella-contaminated eggs is just the latest tragic example of how our nation’s food safety programs fail to protect consumers from unsafe food. We applaud Senator Squadron and Assemblymember Kavanagh for their leadership in putting forward strengthened food safety measures to better protect New York citizens.”

Nancy Romer, founding member of the Brooklyn Food Coalition and a Professor of Psychology at Brooklyn College, said, “Kudos to state legislators who are working to protect our people and our agriculture! We need sensible government regulations of food operations that offer us improved health and peace of mind. We need to require vaccination of egg-producing chickens and that all eggs sold in New York State come from vaccinated chickens. Mega farms producing hundreds of millions of eggs per year are ripe for disease and inadequate protection of the public health. Strong agricultural systems with a downstate-upstate alliance of producers and consumers will put New York State in the vanguard of safe, sustainable, and healthy food systems. I applaud legislators who protect smaller scale, local farmers, as well as consumers. This legislation will do both.”

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