

December 10, 2024

Mark Arney
Executive Director and CEO
National Watermelon Promotion Board

Dear Mr. Arney:

First and foremost, I extend my gratitude to the National Watermelon Promotion Board (NWPB) for its work in promoting the succulent joy that is the watermelon. However, recent revelations about the board's involvement in animal testing have left me deeply concerned.

Watermelon is healthy and delicious, so it's disheartening to learn that vulnerable animals have been subjected to painful experiments in order to promote its consumption. I'm aware that at least 450 mice and rats have been forced to suffer in cruel and unnecessary testing in the name of marketing watermelons. Injecting animals with carcinogens, force-feeding them watermelon, and inducing colitis are objectionable practices from both ethical and scientific perspectives. Watermelon, a safe, time-honored food for humans, should be promoted through superior, cruelty-free methods.

These experiments, funded by the NWPB, are a cocktail of absurdity that involves mutilating animals in an attempt to make claims about human health and sell fruit. Please, I urge you to take a step forward by adopting a policy that clearly prohibits funding such cruel and ridiculous tests, as well as switching to human-relevant, animal-free science that not only promotes your product effectively but also aligns with modern ethical standards. Your peers, including the Hass Avocado Board, the National Mango Board, and dozens of food and beverage companies, have already done so.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

María Celeste Arrarás