

TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

TODD STAPLES
COMMISSIONER

June 16, 2014

Mr. Steve Ells
Founder, Chairman and Co-CEO
Chipotle Mexican Grill, Inc.
1401 Wynkoop Street, Suite 500
Denver, CO 80202

Dear Mr. Ells:

As Texas Agriculture Commissioner, I truly appreciate the past efforts made by Chipotle to support family farms and your company's dedication to serving locally-grown products. However, I am shocked by your recent decision to start serving meat that's been shipped in from more than 8,000 miles away. I also was dismayed by your misguided and irresponsible declaration that this meat is somehow more "responsibly raised" than meat produced by Texas ranchers. American consumers deserve better.

Texas is home to the nation's largest cattle herd and nearly 249,000 farms and ranches that cover an astounding 130.2 million acres. We have a wide variety of producers and processors. It seems foolish to discount these immense, local resources when making decisions about where to source your beef.

On the Chipotle website, I see a compelling statement that your company has been able to increase the available supply of naturally-raised meats through simple economics of supply and demand. In addition, in your Huffington Post article, you mention that as Chipotle restaurants have grown, the company has given farmers the opportunity to grow with you.

Your decision to forego American beef is premature. In fact, the decision seems to abandon the work you and your company have accomplished in supporting local farming.

I personally invite you and the Chipotle team to meet face-to-face with myself and other Texas beef industry leaders to discuss how we can help supply Chipotle's growing demand for fresh, healthy beef. After all, Texas beef would not have to travel thousands of miles and leave a substantial carbon footprint before ending up in a Chipotle burrito.

We are very proud that 98 percent of the farms and ranches in Texas are family farms. These hard-working Texans care deeply for their animals and customers, and these good business men and women are eager to expand. If Chipotle comes knocking, it only makes smart business sense that our farmers and ranchers would explore the opportunity.

I encourage you to contact me at (512) 463-1408 to set up a meeting. I am confident that we can find a way to make sure all of the beef served in Chipotle restaurants comes from right here in the United States, or better yet, from Texas.

Sincerely yours,



Todd Staples

TS/LP/er

