

## How will farmers keep up with growing demand for ‘antibiotic-free’ and ‘cage-free’ animal products?

Though Chipotle Mexican Grill started as a big-as-your-head burrito chain, today its media coverage usually focuses its “morals” rather than what’s on the menu. In 2000, Chipotle began a policy of serving antibiotic-free pork sourced from Niman Ranch, among others, with other meats to follow.

Meanwhile, many of the largest chains have been linked to egg, dairy, or meat suppliers whose animals were raised in less than pastoral conditions. But within the last few years, the McFoods of the world have started changing their tune. The great PR and constant growth of Chipotle has made more-traditional chains eager to cash in on public goodwill, as well. In 2012, [Dunkin’ Donuts announced](#) that it would use cage-free eggs in its breakfast sandwiches and source pork from farmers who don’t use gestation crates. [In March of this year](#), McDonald’s committed to no longer serving “chicken raised without antibiotics that are important to human medicine” and “milk from cows that are not treated with rbST, an artificial growth hormone.” Even Starbucks continues “[expanding](#)” its supply of cage-free eggs.

As it turns out, Chipotle’s humane sourcing wasn’t an anomaly so much as a move that was a step ahead of the market. But at just 1,831 stores total, Chipotle is able to do so on a relatively small scale. When giants like McDonald’s (at more than 14,000 stores) and Starbucks (with 12,233 locations in the U.S.) get into the game, the question becomes whether there’s enough responsibly sourced animal products to go around.

**The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion and analysis. Read full, original post: [Fast-Food Chains Are Demanding Ethical Products. How Will Farmers Keep Up?](#)**