

Who regulates animal antibiotics?

Like human medicines, all animal medicines are required by law to meet certain requirements before going to market. Antibiotics undergo a rigorous review process by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), which approves all antibiotics used for food-producing animals. All products approved by the FDA for use in food-producing animals must pass significant human- and food-safety benchmarks. This process helps protect human health while giving veterinarians and farmers the tools they need to keep animals healthy.

“Our clients — our producers — look to veterinarians for guidance and direction on how a number of activities are conducted on the farm.”

— DR. HARRY SNELSON, AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF SWINE VETERINARIANS

Veterinarians and Judicious Use

As good corporate citizens, we are responsible for the products we put into the marketplace. We work across the animal health industry to ensure the judicious and proper use of antibiotics. The AVMA, working with various species-specific veterinary organizations and government agencies, has developed guidelines for the prudent use of antibiotics in farm animals to ensure the right drug is used at the right time to treat the right pathogen or disease. These include guidelines for the judicious therapeutic use of antimicrobials for the veterinarians of beef cattle, dairy cows, swine and poultry.

Since 1998, AHI has supported the AVMA's Judicious Use of Antimicrobials. The guidelines specifically outline the following appropriate uses of antibiotics:

- **Problem prevention** — Emphasize appropriate husbandry and hygiene, routine health examinations and vaccinations.
- **Veterinary oversight** — Licensed veterinarians should work with producers to make decisions on the selection and use of antibiotics.
- **First-line therapy** — Veterinarians discourage the use of antibiotics that are important to treating strategic human or animal infections as first-line therapy.
- **Prioritize treatment** — Limit antibiotic use to sick or at-risk animals to treat the fewest number of animals possible.
- **Scientific analysis** — Maintain accurate records of treatment and analyze the outcomes to evaluate therapeutic regimens.

“Veterinarians do not arbitrarily or haphazardly give antibiotics to food-producing animals. Rather, we use scientifically based assessments and multi-agency guidelines to help us govern our decisions.”

— DR. GRANT MILLER, CALIFORNIA VETERINARY MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

“America’s livestock, dairy and poultry producers [...] are committed to using antibiotics responsibly and have developed responsible-use guidelines for each of their respective industries.”

— CONGRESSMAN LEONARD BOSWELL (D-IA)