

KEEPING ANIMALS HEALTHY AND YOUR FOOD SAFE

The importance of livestock antibiotics goes well beyond the farm. Keeping farm animals healthy protects the food we eat and keeps us healthy. Farmers do their very best to care for their animals by providing shelter, clean and nutritious food and veterinary care. But sometimes, farm animals do get sick. Antibiotics are an important and humane tool used to comfort and treat livestock in time of illness.

Bacteria-fighting medicine

Antibiotics are substances that stop or slow the growth of dangerous bacteria such as salmonella or E. coli. As humans we use them to treat and prevent certain bacterial infections.¹ Farmers use antibiotics in animals for the same reason.

Categories of animal antibiotics²

Treatment Used to treat an ill animal

accurate records.4

Control Used to control the spread of a disease on a farm Prevention

Used to prevent the spread of disease between animals

Growth

Sometimes used in beef cattle and overseen and regulated by the FDA, growth hormones (steroid implants) are used at specific stages of animals' growth to improve their ability to convert feed to muscle. Implants are placed in the animal's ear and have a zero-day withdrawal, meaning the meat from the animal is safe to eat at any time after receiving the implant. **Growth hormones are not used in dairy, pigs or poultry.**

Multiple checkpoints ensure a safe food supply

Before food production

After food production

USDA **FDA** Safe food starts **Before any medicine The United States** with farmers. is approved to use, **Department of** the FDA determines A close partnership Agriculture (USDA) between a farmer the amount of regularly tests and veterinarian time it takes for an food to ensure it is means a judicious antibiotic to clear antibiotic free. use of medication an animal's system and maintaining before it enters the

> food supply, to make sure your food is safe.⁴

Responsibly using a necessary tool

Antibiotic resistance

Farmers and veterinarians share your concern. Sometimes bacteria become resistant to antibiotics after repeated exposure. When this happens the bacteria multiply and antibiotics become less effective.⁵

Preventing antibiotic resistance

Veterinarians and medical professionals are working together to ensure approved animal antibiotics are safe and do not promote human resistance. One of the best ways to prevent human resistance is to separate those which are medically important for humans from those used in animals.⁶ The most common antibiotics used in animal agriculture, ionophores and tetracyclines, are used in less than 4 percent of humans.² Penicillin, cephalosporin and sulfa are the most common human antibiotics and are used in less than 10 percent of animals.²





A new way to look at farm animal antibiotic use

It's true more antibiotics are used with animals, but that's because there **are 23 times more farm animals in the U.S. than humans**.⁷ There are 9.3 billion farm animals compared to only 326 million people.⁸

1 Microbic

animals/ 3. Sood and Drug Administration: https://www.ahi.org/issues-advocacy/animal-antibiotics/benfits-of-antibi