

Antibiotics in farm animals - IFAH-Europe response to O'Neill report on antimicrobials in agriculture

Written by IFAH-Europe on 8 December 2015 in Press Release
Press Release

Brussels, 8 December 2015 - IFAH-Europe welcomes the approach of the latest report of the independent Review on Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR), chaired by Lord O'Neill. It highlights that antibiotic resistance is a global challenge and not one that just exists in Europe, where antibiotics are subject to strict veterinary prescription rules.



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The report calls for a global target for the reduction of antibiotics, but says it should be for individual countries to decide how best to achieve this goal.

"As animal species, husbandry practices and climate conditions vary in different parts of the world,

proposals to apply standards from one country may not be feasible for other countries. In the EU for example, antibiotics have not been used for growth promotion since 2006," said Roxane Feller, IFAH-Europe Secretary General.

"Policies to tackle antibiotic resistance require a multi-disciplinary approach based on science and reliable facts. In the interest of animal welfare, the main objective should be to reduce resistance to antibiotics, not simply to reduce antibiotic use. A sick animal must be treated with the appropriate medicine when necessary," concluded Ms. Feller.

The animal health industry in Europe uses the adage that antibiotics should be used "as little as possible and as much as necessary". The industry actively promotes the responsible use of all animal medicines along with biosecurity, vaccination programmes and other animal husbandry measures. These actions should be accompanied by programmes for monitoring both the use of antibiotics in animals and the development of resistance, as well as a predictable regulatory environment that encourages investment in improving existing antibiotics as well as researching new antibiotics and innovative alternatives.

IFAH-Europe is a partner of the European Platform for Responsible Use of Medicines in Animals (www.epruma.eu [1]) founded in 2005 and a strong supporter of the European Medicines Agency's European Surveillance of Veterinary Antimicrobial Consumption (ESVAC) reports.

About the author

IFAH-Europe is the representative body of manufacturers of veterinary medicines, vaccines and other animal health products in Europe. It promotes a single market in veterinary medicines across the EU ensuring the availability of medicines to protect the health and welfare of animals. Follow IFAH-Europe on Twitter: @IFAHEurope

The Review on Antimicrobial Resistance is commissioned by, and will report to, the UK Prime Minister. The Review is supported in its work by the UK Department of Health, HM Treasury, and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, but it operates autonomously of government control. The Wellcome Trust is providing funding towards the Review's work, and hosts the review team at its London headquarters. The Chair of the Review is Lord Jim O'Neill.

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