

ANTIBIOTIC USE IN CATTLE

INFORMATION ON HOW BEEF IS RAISED — ESPECIALLY WHEN IT COMES TO THE USE OF ANTIBIOTICS — CAN BE CONFUSING.

GET CLEAR FACTS ON HOW THE BEEF YOU BUY IS PRODUCED.

Farmers and ranchers are already putting new practices in place to limit the use of antibiotics and restrict the use for growth. These new practices meet or exceed the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) updated guidelines (209 and 213) around administering antibiotics to cattle. Read below to get the facts about how beef is cared for and raised.

GUIDELINES FOR ADMINISTERING ANTIBIOTICS TO CATTLE ARE ESTABLISHED AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL.

The Beef Quality Assurance (BQA) program has been in place since the 1980's. BQA is a nationally-coordinated, voluntary program that includes guidelines for cattle farmers and ranchers and includes 14 guidelines for use of antibiotics.

Recent guidance by the FDA (209 and 213) requires more veterinary oversight for use of antibiotics that are important in human medicine. It also phases out the use of antibiotics for growth purposes.¹

With these changes in regulations, the BQA program has developed "Antibiotic Stewardship For Beef Producers," a convenient resource for cattlemen to make sure they have the latest information on antibiotic use.

BQA INCLUDES

14

GUIDELINES FOR USE OF ANTIBIOTICS IN CATTLE.

ANTIBIOTICS ARE JUST ONE TOOL TO KEEP CATTLE HEALTHY.

Antibiotics are just one tool that can be used by cattle farmers to ensure the health of the animals in their care. Cattlemen work with their veterinarian to develop a preventative herd health plan including routine vaccinations to promote strong immunity against common cattle diseases.

However, sometimes an animal becomes sick and not treating a sick animal would be cruel. Cattlemen work closely with veterinarians when a herd or a member of the herd becomes ill or at times when cattle are susceptible to illness, using precise doses of an antibiotic to prevent specific diseases or conditions.

CATTEMEN USE MANY STRATEGIES TO ENCOURAGE HEALTHY HERDS.

"ANTIBIOTIC FREE" OR "RAISED WITHOUT ANTIBIOTICS"?

Farmers, ranchers, veterinarians and the FDA are committed to ensuring no meat with a violative antibiotic residue enters the food supply. Withdrawal times, the time between when an animal receives an antibiotic and when it may be slaughtered — which are required by the FDA — ensure antibiotics are fully processed by the animal's body and out of its system before the animal is slaughtered for meat. It is also notable that science does not support claims that meat from animals raised without antibiotics is safer or healthier for you.

THE FDA ENSURES THAT NO MEAT WITH RESIDUE ABOVE THE FDA TOLERANCE LEVEL ENTERS THE FOOD SUPPLY.

MOST ANTIBIOTICS GIVEN TO CATTLE ARE RARELY OR NEVER PRESCRIBED TO HUMANS.

Cattle farmers and ranchers have many tools in their toolkits to keep the animals in their care healthy, including nutrition programs, veterinary care, proper housing, management practices, vaccines and antibiotics, when necessary. However, more than 71% of the most common antibiotics used for animals are not used or rarely prescribed to humans.²

Also, recent guidance (209 and 213) by the FDA will create more opportunity for ranchers to incorporate veterinary consultation, as vets have oversight for use of antibiotics that are important in human medicine and have a valid use in animals.¹

71%
OF ANTIBIOTICS USED FOR ANIMALS ARE NOT USED OR RARELY PRESCRIBED IN HUMANS.

ANTIBIOTICS PROTECT INDIVIDUAL ANIMALS, AND THE HERD, FROM ILLNESS.

Cattle may be given antibiotics during key moments of their life when they are more susceptible to illness, when they are weaned from their mother or comingled with cattle from other herds for example. This helps protect both the individual animal and the rest of the herd, and keeps a potential illness from spreading.

Antibiotics are not inexpensive, in fact they are a significant expense for cattle farmers and ranchers. Cattlemen have no added incentive to use them except as outlined by a veterinarian as part of their animal care plan.

ANTIBIOTICS ARE EXPENSIVE:
THERE IS NO ADDED INCENTIVE TO USE THEM EXCEPT ANIMAL HEALTH.

ANTIBIOTICS ARE ONLY GIVEN TO CATTLE TO TREAT, CONTROL OR PREVENT DISEASE.

As part of the new FDA guidance (209 and 213), growth promotion uses of medically important antibiotics in feed and water have been eliminated; these products are only used to treat, prevent and control disease under oversight of a veterinarian.

Some cattle farmers and ranchers choose to use ionophores — a special class of antibiotics not used in human medicine that help cattle digest their feed better. This results in more efficient cattle growth while preserving resources like land, water and feed.

VETERINARIAN OVERSIGHT:
IT'S A VITAL PART OF CARING FOR CATTLE.



¹ Guidance for Industry #209, Source: FDA 2012; Guidance for Industry #213, Source: FDA 2013

² 2011 SUMMARY REPORT On Antimicrobials Sold or Distributed for Use in Food-Producing Animals, Source: FDA 2011