



POSITION STATEMENT

THE CANADIAN ANIMAL HEALTH INSTITUTE SUPPORTS THE RESPONSIBLE USE OF ANTIMICROBIALS

June 12, 2017

The Canadian Animal Health Institute (CAHI) and its members collaborate with Health Canada, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, the veterinary community, farmers, animal owners and consumers to promote the safe and responsible use of antimicrobials.

Expertise, complementarity of professionals and the availability of effective methods are key elements in the process of judicious use of antimicrobials. The responsible use of antimicrobials by veterinary and human medicine professionals and by animal owners to protect the health and welfare of both animals and humans can be promoted by understanding that:

- Regular review of antimicrobial stewardship initiatives, with a view to continuous improvement, contributes to preserving the effectiveness of antimicrobials in the treatment of animals and humans;
- The veterinarian-client-patient relationship is paramount, given the importance of using antimicrobials in accordance with best practice recommendations; and
- Adoption of new practices and the establishment of new housing systems along with the development of a regulatory pathway for alternatives, are likely to reduce the risk of diseases and bacterial infections and in turn reduce the need for antimicrobial use.

CAHI fully supports recent and upcoming changes made by Health Canada to how antimicrobials can be used to support animal health. For more information on these initiatives can be found on our website at www.cahi-icsa.ca.

What is antimicrobial resistance?

An antimicrobial is a health product that kills microorganisms or stops their growth. Antibiotics, antifungals, biostatics, antiseptics and disinfectants are all subtypes of antimicrobials. Antimicrobial resistance is when one of these types of agents, usually a human or veterinary drug, stops working because the microorganism it is supposed to kill has somehow developed the ability to continue to survive and replicate.

Antimicrobial resistance is a global One Health issue, particularly with respect to antibiotics. When these bacteria survive and continue to replicate and the infection does not go away, antimicrobial

resistance can be a cause. Treatment of disease may require the use of a different, more powerful antimicrobial to target these resistant bacteria. The problem is there are only a limited number of antimicrobials.

CAHI's members are committed to providing safe and effective animal health tools to promote the health and welfare of animals. Before an animal health product can be marketed they must meet strict requirements set by the Government of Canada for effectiveness, and pass a risk assessment for human and animal health, food safety and the environment.

Some of CAHI's actions related to antimicrobial stewardship:

- Participates in the ongoing development and use of the [Guidelines for the prudent use of veterinary drugs by the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association](#).
- Creation of a voluntary product logo to more easily identify medically important antimicrobials used in veterinary medicine.
- Promotes the importance of the [veterinarian-client-patient relationship](#) in assessing an animal's health needs, accurately diagnosing diseases, and treating with the appropriate animal health product at the right dose for the correct duration.
- Actively participates in provincial, national and international discussions on antimicrobial resistance and strategic actions that promote the concept of One Health.
- Advocate for the use of licensed veterinary drugs in Canada to ensure the quality, safety and equivalence of purchased products.

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