



PRESS RELEASE

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Education critical for successful implementation of new drug use policies

OAK BROOK, IL Jan. 20, 2016: A lack of knowledge about new policy requirements on the use of antimicrobial drugs in food animals, as well as access to veterinary services, are critical barriers to the successful implementation of these federal policies, according to a report released today by Farm Foundation, NFP.

“Despite months of work by organizations, agencies and media outlets, many stakeholders lack a full understanding of the policies that have been put in place by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA),” said Foundation President Neil Conklin. “This lack of knowledge is a critical barrier to successful implementation of the policies, which take full effect at the end of 2016.”

The Farm Foundation report—*Stewardship of Antimicrobial Drug Use in Food-Producing Animals*—was released today at the national summit, *Antibiotic Stewardship: Policy, Education and Economics*, which is taking place at the Hyatt Regency Hotel Capitol Hill, 400 New Jersey Ave. NW, Washington, D.C. More than 160 leaders in the livestock sector, the veterinary community, the human health community and the feed industry, as well as state and federal regulators are participating in the two-day summit. The Summit is a collaboration of Farm Foundation, NFP, USDA’s Economic Research Service, the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities and the Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges.

“Successful implementation of these policies is critical to public and animal health, ensuring consumer confidence in food safety and the future viability of animal agriculture in the United States,” says Farm Foundation Trustee Joe Swedberg, who chairs the Project Advisory Committee. “Through the workshops and survey, it was evident that some veterinarians and producers—especially those with smaller operations—are not fully aware of the production practice adjustments needed. Much educational work has been done, but still more is needed to reach the full scope of the industry.”

Access to veterinary services was another recurring issue in the workshops and survey. The new policies require livestock producers to maintain a Veterinary-Client-Patient-Relationship (VCPR) with a veterinarian. But in some locales, including some urban fringe areas, there is a shortage of veterinarians or of veterinarians who treat food-producing animals.

The report cites the need for state and federal officials to, in the short term, work with colleges of veterinary medicine and professional veterinary organizations to quickly develop options for small producers in underserved areas to have access to veterinary services. “We need to explore new models to deliver veterinary services in underserved areas,” Conklin said.

Long-term, part of the solution will be to find options to increase the number of veterinarians with economically-sustainable food-animal practices.

Facing particular challenges are producers raising small ruminants or what are known as “minor species,” such as goats, deer, bison, fish or honeybees. Few pharmaceutical products are approved for use in these species, which risk being “orphan indications” due to the limited market size. “FDA and the veterinary pharmaceutical industry, along with industry groups, need to seek solutions to these challenges,” Conklin notes.

FDA has issued Guidance for Industry (GFIs) #209 and #213 regarding the use of medically-important antimicrobial drugs in food-producing animals, as well as a revised Veterinary Feed Directive (VFD) rule. These

actions mean some medically-important antimicrobial drugs will see label changes allowing only therapeutic uses (prevention, control or treatment of disease), and use of the drugs in feed or water will require a veterinarian's prescription or direct administration by a veterinarian.

Between August and October 2015, Farm Foundation hosted 12 workshops across the country for veterinarians, feed suppliers and livestock producers to learn about the new policies. Stakeholders were also invited to participate in an online survey, whether or not they attended the workshops. Officials from FDA and USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), participated in all the workshops—providing details on the policies and gaining feedback on the challenges of implementation.

"This direct interaction of stakeholders with FDA and APHIS was one of the most valued elements of the workshops," Conklin reports. Stakeholders provided FDA with a list of questions regarding specifics of implementation, the resolution of which has the potential to strengthen the impact of the policy implementation. "This highlights the complexity and diversity of the nation's livestock industry, and the importance of a continuing dialogue between industry and state and federal regulators not only for successful implementation, but to help support a continuing process of stewardship," he adds.

Farm Foundation initiated this project in its role as an objective convener, explains Swedberg, a retired executive of Hormel Foods. "Farm Foundation is uniquely positioned to provide leadership in this type of project. We bring diverse stakeholders to the table to address issues shaping the future—in this case farmers and ranchers, veterinarians, feed suppliers and federal and state regulators," he adds.

A 501(c)3 nonprofit, Farm Foundation works as a catalyst for sound public policy by providing objective information to foster a deeper understanding of issues shaping the future for agriculture, food systems and rural communities. Since its founding in 1933, Farm Foundation has been a non-advocacy organization. The Foundation does not lobby or advocate positions. The Foundation's action comes in bringing industry leaders together to examine evolving issues that will shape the future of the industry. Antimicrobial drug use in food-producing animals is just such an issue.

About half of the Foundation's funding is from an endowment set up by its founders. The remainder is contributions from individuals, other foundations and companies who support the Foundation's work. For this project, in-kind, collaborative and financial support was received from: Auburn University College of Agriculture; Barn Media; American Association of Bovine Practitioners; C-ARC Enterprises, Inc.; Alabama Extension Service; Elanco Animal Health; Alabama Cattlemen's Association; Farm Credit; Alabama Farmers Cooperative; Hardin Farms; Arizona State University Morrison School of Agribusiness; Hormel Foods Corporation; Association of Public and Land-grant Universities; Irsik Farms; Association of American Veterinary Medicine Colleges; JBS United; Economic Research Service, USDA; Jennie-O Turkey Store; Iowa State University College of Agriculture and Life Sciences; J.R. Simplot Company; Kentucky Veterinary Medical Association; Kautz Farms; National Pork Board; National Pork Producers Council; National Turkey Federation; National Western Stock Show; North American Meat Institute; North Carolina Farm Bureau; University of Arizona College of Agriculture and Life Sciences; Pew Charitable Trusts; University of Arizona Veterinary Medical Education Program; Rose Acre Farms; University of California, Davis, School of Veterinary Medicine; Texas Cattle Feeders Association; University of Idaho College of Agricultural and Life Sciences; Texas A&M AgriLife Research; and Western Dairy Association.

Details of the workshop locations, as well as a copy of the full report, are available on the [Farm Foundation website](#).

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