



## UNITED STATES ANIMAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION

### Resolution

114th Annual Meeting ~ November 11-17, 2010

Minneapolis, MN

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**RESOLUTION NUMBER: 26 APPROVED AS AMENDED**

**SOURCE:** COMMITTEE ON PHARMACEUTICALS

**SUBJECT MATTER:** SUPPORT FOR ANTIBIOTIC USE IN ROUTINE LIVESTOCK AND POULTRY DISEASE TREATMENT, CONTROL, AND PREVENTION

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

The use of antimicrobial agents for disease treatment, control and prevention in animals is fundamental to animal health and well-being. The judicious use of antimicrobials is one of the most important tools that veterinarians have to protect human and animal health, and the use of veterinary drugs, when necessary, is essential to treat, control, and prevent animal disease. Multiple layers of protection are in place to ensure that the use of antimicrobial agents for maintaining animal health does not harm public health: Food and Drug Administration (FDA) assessment of antimicrobial agents, determination of drug withdrawal time, and approval process for use; FDA post-approval monitoring; multi-agency guidelines for judicious therapeutic use of antimicrobial agents; the multi-agency National Residue Program with its rigorous processes for approval, sampling and testing, and enforcement; the National Antimicrobial Resistance Monitoring System; and public and private monitoring and surveillance systems for emergence of antimicrobial resistance. Congressional efforts to further regulate the use of antimicrobial agents in food-producing animals without thorough, evidenced-based risk assessments threaten the ability to protect animal health. The continued availability of safe, effective antimicrobials for veterinary medical use, including the retention of currently approved drugs and the future approvals of new drugs, are critical components to ensure a safe food supply and are essential to the improvement of animal health and welfare.

Some opponents of antimicrobial use in livestock and poultry suggest that routine use of antimicrobials is a matter of rote procedure, without thought or medical basis, regardless of whether or not there is a need for antimicrobial use. This perception is inaccurate. Livestock and poultry production is a routine, predictable process, yet requires a great deal of precise monitoring of animal health and disease conditions.

Unlike humans, livestock and poultry raised for food are typically selectively bred, genetically similar, and raised in controlled environments to produce a specific uniform product that is safe, wholesome, and meets the expectations of the consumer. Therefore, many of the potential diseases that may affect these animals can be predicted and prevented by a veterinarian. If a disease is predictable and preventable, it is prudent for the veterinarian to recommend therapy to prevent the disease and to alleviate the pain and suffering associated with the disease. Likewise, if an infectious disease is diagnosed in a herd or flock, it is incumbent upon the veterinarian to initiate appropriate therapy to minimize further disease spread and alleviate associated pain and suffering. Antimicrobial therapy should not be categorically presumed to be injudicious based on quantity, frequency, or duration of use, particularly if the recommendation has been made by a veterinarian.

**RESOLUTION:**

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) urges the United States Department of Health and Human Services, Food and Drug Administration (FDA), Center for Veterinary Medicine to strongly support the continued availability and judicious use of antibiotics for disease treatment, control, and prevention. The USAHA also urges the FDA to work collaboratively with the United States Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Veterinary Services and animal industry organizations to develop and expand outreach on judicious uses of antibiotics to ensure the maintenance of a healthy animal population.