



USAHA News Release

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For immediate release:

LACK OF PHARMACEUTICAL HARMONIZATION JEOPARDIZES U.S. EXPORTS

Reno, Nev., Oct. 23, 2007 - The lack of harmonization in the approval process for pharmaceutical could jeopardize trade in U.S. meat and poultry products in the global marketplace. This issue was the theme of the meeting of the U.S. Animal Health Association (USAHA) Committee on Pharmaceuticals held here this week.

Presentations included a review of the science behind the drug approval process that highlighted the similarities and differences between the United States, Japan, Codex and European Union (EU) reviews. These differences lead to different minimum residue level systems and subsequent withdrawal periods. The point was made that all review methods result in the safe production of meat, milk and eggs.

A representative from the U.S. Meat Export Federation provided background on the economic impact of meat exports. He emphasized that in a world with expanding free trade, residue detection may be a barrier that countries will use to protect their native production.

A National Pork Board representative reported on the U.S. experience with the implementation of Japan's "positive list," a minimum residue level-based residue protection program. In the 17 months since it has been in effect, there have been no violations.

Another presentation focused on the implications of the rapid change in withdrawal times required because of enforcement of the "positive list." Economic hardship fell on companies heavily reliant on exports to Japan. This could have been avoided with better understanding of the situation by pharmaceutical companies and the pork industry. The speaker said better communication in the future and active participation in international standard-setting organizations is required by all associated with the production of livestock products.

The risk analysis and communication plan used by a pharmaceutical company in the rapid distribution of new requirements for meat destined for export was outlined in another presentation.

A final report described the interaction of U.S. and global standard-setting agencies and stressed the necessity for communication from all stakeholders.

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