



Antibiotics

Healthy Animals for Healthy Food



Why Use Antibiotics?

- ▶ Antibiotics are an important tool to prevent, control, and treat disease in cattle.
- ▶ Antibiotics made specifically for cattle help animals regain or maintain superior health. Healthy cattle are the foundation of safe food.

Is Antibiotic Use in Cattle Safe?

- ▶ Yes. All antibiotics used in beef cattle production go through a rigorous testing process before being approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA).
- ▶ This process helps protect human health while giving veterinarians and beef producers the tools to keep animals healthy.
- ▶ By law, no beef with antibiotic residues that exceed FDA standards is allowed in the food supply.
- ▶ All products approved by FDA for use in food-producing animals must pass significant human food safety benchmarks.

What about Disease Resistance?

- ▶ Cattle producers avoid using antibiotics that are important in human medicine.
- ▶ In multiple studies, no connection has been found between antibiotic use in cattle and antibiotic-resistant foodborne or other pathogens.
- ▶ The U.S. government closely tracks antibiotic resistance and monitors and reviews products and interventions.

Highlights from the Beef Producers Guide for Judicious Use of Antimicrobials in Cattle

Prevent Problems: Emphasize appropriate husbandry and hygiene, routine health examinations, and vaccinations.

Select and Use Antibiotics Carefully: Consult with your veterinarian on the selection and use of antibiotics. Have a valid reason to use an antibiotic. Therapeutic alternatives should be considered prior to using antimicrobial therapy.

Avoid Using Antibiotics Important In Human Medicine As First Line Therapy: Avoid using as the first antibiotic those medications that are important to treating strategic human or animal infections.

Treat the Fewest Number of Animals Possible: Limit antibiotic use to sick or at risk animals.

Treat for the Recommended Time Period: To minimize the potential for bacteria to become resistant to antimicrobials.

Extralabel Antibiotic Use Must follow FDA Regulations: Prescriptions, including extra label use of medications must meet the Animal Medicinal Drug Use Clarification Act (AMDUCA) amendments to the Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act and its regulations. This includes having a valid Veterinary-Client-Relationship.

Subtherapeutic Antibiotic Use Is Discouraged: Antibiotic use should be limited to prevent or control disease and should not be used if the principle intent is to improve performance.

Through our Beef Quality Assurance Program (BQA), NCBA has been training beef producers about the safe and appropriate use of antibiotics for more than two decades.

NCBA has guidelines for "Judicious Use of Antimicrobials." See highlights of that document in the blue text box.

Prohibiting all low-level applications of antibiotics used in livestock will reduce our ability to address disease in cattle.

