

18 November 2019

World Antibiotic Awareness Week 2019

Today marks the beginning of World Antibiotic Awareness Week (WAAW) 2019 (18-24 November) which will highlight the theme “The future of antibiotics depends on all of us!”

WAAW provides an opportunity to highlight the importance of antimicrobial stewardship in ensuring that we continue to have access to the critically important medicines that help to keep people, animals and the environment healthy.

Antibiotics are just one of many tools that used to keep animals healthy and minimise the risk of disease. Animal husbandry practices that support good animal health and welfare also include:

- Good housing, shelter and nutrition;
- Strong hygiene and biosecurity practices;
- Regular parasite and pest control;
- The use of vaccines to prevent disease (where possible);
- Early detection and treatment of illness and disease;
- Use of pain relief for routine husbandry procedures (eg: tailing, castration);
- Use of low stress stock handling techniques during mustering, handling and transport;
- Selective breeding for welfare-friendly traits, such as polled (hornless) cattle and calm temperaments.

To ensure that antibiotics continue to be effective, it is critically important that pet owners and livestock producers use antibiotics responsibly, judiciously and only when needed. Good animal health is essential to good animal welfare outcomes.

The animal health industry is committed to the responsible and judicious use of antibiotics, as an essential part of animal health and welfare. There are a number of materials available to support best practice use:

- 10 recommendations for the responsible use and judicious use of antibiotics for [livestock and horses](#) as well as [companion animals](#).
- Prescribing Guidelines ([AIDAP detailed guidelines](#) for dogs and cats and [prescribing guidelines for pigs](#)).
- [Animal health sector commitments and actions on antibiotic use](#).

World Antibiotic Awareness Week (WAAW) is an initiative led by the World Health Organisation (WHO), World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

Media contact: Brie Colley 0474 740 808