



Animal
Medicines
Australia



Position Statement: Promoting responsible and judicious use of antimicrobials

Animal Medicines Australia (AMA) and our members support the responsible, sustainable and judicious use of veterinary medicines, including antimicrobial products. Responsible and judicious use of antimicrobials protects and promotes human and animal health, animal welfare, food security and safety, sustainable and responsible livestock production and beneficial relationships between people and their pets.

Like people, animals can become ill or injured. When this occurs, antibiotics can be critical tools in effective treatment. Using the right product, at the right dose, at the right time will help to reduce the development of resistance and protect the effectiveness of antibiotics in the future.

AMA works with our members, governments, regulators, livestock and pet industries to promote practices that recognise the essential role that antimicrobial products play in veterinary medicine and that mitigate risks from misuse.

► *continued over page*



◀ AMA seeks to ensure responsible and judicious use by:

PROMOTING ANIMAL HEALTH AND WELFARE IN A UNIFIED ONE HEALTH APPROACH

AMA promotes a One Health approach to the challenges of antimicrobial resistance that considers human health, animal health and the environmental impacts of antibiotic use. We do this by supporting effective relationships between key stakeholders, including animal health companies, veterinarians, retailers, industry bodies, farmers, pet owners, regulatory authorities and governments to promote co-ordinated and co-operative actions in all sectors. This will ensure that the intended outcomes are achieved and unintended negative consequences can be avoided.

PROMOTING JUDICIOUS AND RESPONSIBLE USE AT ALL TIMES

AMA promotes the responsible and judicious use of antibiotics in animals. Antibiotic resistance is less likely to develop when antibiotics are used appropriately and judiciously. This means using the right antibiotic, at the right time, in the right amount, for the right length of time, and only when needed. Responsible and judicious use of antibiotics to treat bacterial infections in both humans and animals will ensure that target bacteria are controlled effectively and efficiently, whilst minimising the risk of resistance developing.

AMA and its members promote responsible and judicious use by:

- Supporting an effective regulatory framework for veterinary medicines.
- Developing and promoting best-practice, evidence-based antibiotic prescribing guidelines for all major livestock species and for pets.
- Establishing partnerships with veterinarians and livestock industries to promote greater understanding of the importance of judicious and responsible use.
- Removal of growth promotion claims on 'shared-class'¹ antibiotic products.

PROMOTING DISEASE PREVENTION

Antibiotics are just one of many tools that are used to keep animals healthy and minimise the risk of disease. Good hygiene and animal care practices can reduce the incidence of many bacterial infections and reduce the need to use antibiotics.

Animal husbandry practices that support good animal health and welfare, and reduce the need to use antibiotics, include (but are not limited to):

- Provision of good housing, shelter and nutrition,
- Strong hygiene and biosecurity practices,
- Regular parasite and pest control,
- Use of vaccines to prevent disease (where possible),
- Early detection and treatment of illness and disease, and
- Use of low stress stock handling techniques during mustering, handling and transport.

AMA members continue to invest in new products that will help to prevent illness and disease, and thereby reduce the need to use antibiotics in animals. These include new veterinary medicines with novel modes of action, new vaccines, better diagnostics, new technologies, animal-only antimicrobials and genetic technologies.

INCREASING KNOWLEDGE, TRANSPARENCY AND COMMUNICATION

AMA and our members work cooperatively with all of our stakeholders to share information regarding the importance of animal health and our efforts to promote the responsible and judicious use of antimicrobials.

We will continue to develop and promote resources² that assist users to understand their responsibilities in using antibiotic products, such as:

- Top 10 Tips on the Responsible Use of Antibiotics (for Companion Animals; Horses and Livestock), and
- Antibiotic prescribing guidelines for all major livestock species.

Our efforts seek to ensure that all stakeholders understand how protecting animal health through the judicious use of antimicrobials plays an important role in supporting the health of humans, animals and the environment, both now and in the future.

Approved by AMA Board - 18 February 2021

¹ 'Shared-class' antibiotics are used in both human and animal health.

² These resources are freely available on our [website](#).