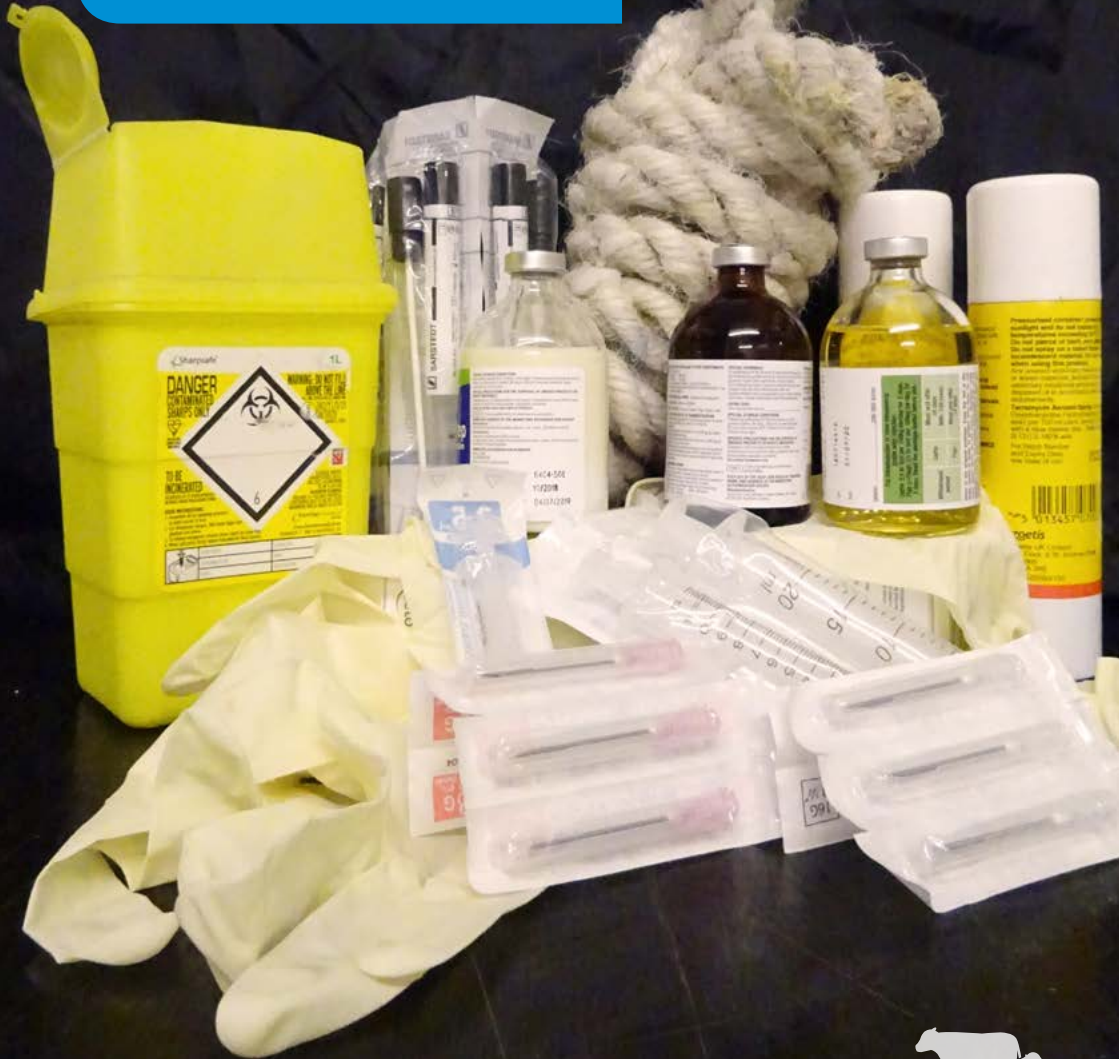


Antibiotic resistance

Using antibiotics responsibly



Antibiotics are a medicine that in most cases should only be used to treat bacterial infections. Over-prescribing and the unnecessary use of antibiotics can increase the emergence of antibiotic-resistant bacteria. Livestock producers have a responsibility to protect human and animal health by using antibiotics responsibly in order to minimise the risk of antibiotic resistance (AMR).

- *The Government is aiming for a 25% reduction on 2016 antibiotic sales by 2020*
- *Producers have a responsibility to guard against antibiotic resistance through responsible use of antibiotics*



What is antibiotic resistance?

- Antibiotic resistance is a natural phenomenon. Resistant bacteria are found both on and in humans, animals and in the environment
- Resistant bacteria can survive treatment with antibiotics
- Antibiotic resistance increases when bacteria are exposed to antibiotics. They can multiply, evolve and transfer their drug resistance to other bacteria

What are the main reasons for antibiotic use on beef and sheep farms?



Beef

- Treatment of calf health problems
- Treatment of pneumonia

Sheep

- To reduce watery mouth and joint ill in young lambs
- To avoid abortion, where vaccination is not used and in the event of an abortion storm
- To treat sheep with footrot or contagious digital dermatitis (CODD)

So what can you do?

- Review and implement biosecurity strategies to prevent disease issues that require antibiotic use on your enterprise
- Discuss antibiotic use with your vet and ensure your herd/flock health plan is fit-for-purpose
- Make sure lambs and calves receive sufficient quantity of good-quality colostrum shortly after birth
- Ask your vet or AHDB about training on responsible antibiotic use

Responsible use of medicines is about using as little as possible but as much as necessary



Things to remember:

- Resistant bacteria are all around us. Resistance occurs naturally as bacteria defend themselves against attack
- Antibiotic resistance is not caused by intensive or productive farming systems
- Strict biosecurity, vaccination and careful livestock management are important ways to avoid bacterial infections in your livestock therefore reducing the need for antibiotic use

All livestock producers are expected to use antibiotics responsibly. The Responsible Use of Medicines Alliance (RUMA) have published sector-specific commitments for responsible use.

More information and sector-specific targets can be found at www.ruma.org.uk

For more information, see the BRP manual **Using medicines correctly for Better Returns**, available at ahdb.org.uk

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