

Food Industry Initiative on **ANTIMICROBIALS**

FIIA Policy on Measurement of Antibiotic Data

- 1. FIIA members will promote, support and facilitate data collection where it does not exist, and centralised data collation where it does, to allow the reporting of national-level data for each key UK species/sector**
 - a. UK farmers and vets have made significant progress in reducing antibiotic use. However, while the Veterinary Medicines Directorate tracks sales of antibiotic products in the UK ([VARSS reports](#)), many products are licensed for multiple species hence this data does not break down sales per species or sector.
 - b. The availability of antibiotic data varies widely by species, due in part to the way each species is farmed. Data collation is less common in unintegrated supply chains or where there are very many producers; this particularly applies in cattle and sheep sectors. While these producers will keep on-farm medicine records and some supply chain data collation may occur, especially in the dairy sector, these are not yet collated nationally.
 - c. Poultry, laying hen, gamebird and aquaculture sectors have set up successful data capture systems covering the vast majority of their producers (see [VARSS 2019](#) showing 90%+ centralised capture of data). The pig sector is also successfully collating 90%+ of antibiotic data on a centralised electronic management system (the [e-Medicines Book or eMB](#)). A [Medicine Hub](#) has now been developed by AHDB to allow the centralised collation of data from the cattle and sheep sectors.

Supporting farmers: By standardising data collection and management, support to farmers on how to engage with these systems can also be more targeted and consistent.

- 2. FIIA members will support the use of standardised industry measurement metrics to aid collation and, where appropriate, benchmarking**
 - a. Each sector has developed standardised measurement metrics for measuring antibiotic data – these are summarised on the [RUMA website](#) and should be used when reporting data to aid consistency and collation.

Supporting farmers: By standardising measurement metrics, data submission will be more consistent and will facilitate benchmarking at farm level.

- 3. FIIA and its members will encourage the eventual incorporation of centralised data capture or collation – directly or indirectly – into farm assurance for all species**
 - a. While some species require electronic recording of antibiotic data as part of farm assurance requirements, eg, pigs in Red Tractor, others currently do not; FIIA believes eventual integration of this requirement into all farm assurance is

critical in building national-level data and encouraging responsible use, although the differing levels of engagement in farm assurance from sector to sector should be noted.

- b. The position regarding electronic collection of antibiotic data in international supply chains needs to be considered.

Supporting farmers: Training on electronic data management could be introduced to ensure that farmers are supported in using new data management systems.

4. FIIA members will aim to turn data into insight on responsible use

- a. In time, if centrally collated data can capture both the quantity of use and reason for use, better insights could be drawn on optimal approaches and the potential to further refine use.
- b. Sharing of data can be based on the FIIA Code of Conduct and could be facilitated through third-party data processing platforms.

Supporting farmers: The aggregation of anonymised farm-level data in the long term would allow farmers the ability to benchmark performance against conditions, creating greater incentive and support for improvement.

5. FIIA members will support high antibiotic users with training and veterinary support

- a. Instances of high antibiotic use can be due to a lack of awareness of preventative practices or lack of access to adequate veterinary support.
- b. Those who collate farm-level data for farmers are in a position to work with farmers and/or vets to benchmark and support where changes in practice could reduce or refine antibiotic use.

Supporting farmers: Farm vets (for example through [Farm Vet Champions](#)) could support practice change following identification of high antibiotic use through benchmarking.

6. FIIA members will aim to capture good practices and scale quickly

- a. One of the barriers to behaviour change in antibiotic use is related to cost. Although vets are increasingly advising farmers on preventative health measures to reduce antibiotic use, there is a lack of information on cost benefits or savings.
- b. Examples of good practice in antibiotic use, especially where cost savings or other benefits are evident, could be more widely disseminated to help engagement.

Supporting farmers: Combining data on good practice and cost with collation of data on use, in one aggregated and centralised system, will help to identify effective practices.

7. FIIA will support alignment of policy and approach across industry, non-governmental and government initiatives

- a. There are a number of working groups and initiatives across government, industry, academia, and NGOs which are not fully linked up, and where collaboration could be improved.
- b. Efforts to improve measurement and support farmers as outlined are happening but more emphasis needs to be placed on achieving this at a national scale or in a coordinated way to facilitate speed of adoption.
- c. FIIA sees RUMA as being central to delivering this joined up approach