

URGING A BAN ON NON-THERAPUTIC USE OF ANTIBIOTICS IN LIVESTOCK

The widespread use of antibiotics in livestock production is promoting the spread of antibiotic resistant bacteria, which is a growing health concern. Eighty percent of the antibiotics sold in the United States are used in livestock production, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has reported that most of those antibiotics are used irresponsibly. Low doses of antibiotics are routinely fed to livestock for growth promotion and disease prevention to compensate for crowded, unsanitary conditions, in a practice known as “nontherapeutic use”.

“Non-therapeutic use” creates ideal conditions for the development of antibiotic resistant bacteria. Antibiotic resistant bacteria on livestock operations are known to spread to retail meat, farmers and farmworkers, and rural environments.

While antibiotic resistance in pathogens due to non-therapeutic use of antibiotics in livestock production has been a public health concern since the 1960s, illnesses caused by their use are a growing concern. Antibiotic resistant bacteria have been the cause of several foodborne illness outbreaks, including a 2011 outbreak of antibiotic resistant *Salmonella* in ground turkey that sickened 136 people, hospitalized 37, and killed one and lead to the third largest meat recall in the USDA’s records and a 2013 outbreak of antibiotic resistant *Salmonella* in chicken that sickened 416 people and hospitalized 162. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported that at least two million Americans suffer from antibiotic resistant bacterial infections each year and twenty-three thousand Americans die from those infections.

The federal government has limited non-therapeutic uses of two classes of antibiotics, but otherwise largely relied on voluntary guidance to attempt to reduce overuse of antibiotics in livestock production, despite regular acknowledgements that nontherapeutic use and the development of antibiotic resistant bacteria poses a significant public health threat.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Dane County Board of Supervisors supports a statewide and national ban on non-therapeutic uses of antibiotics in livestock production.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Dane County Board of Supervisors supports the Protection of Antibiotics for Medical Treatment Act (PAMTA)/Prevention of Antibiotic Resistance Act (PARA) and urges Senator Ron Johnson, Senator Tammy Baldwin, Representative Mark Pocan to co-sponsor the PAMTA/PARA.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Dane County Board of Supervisors urges the Dane County state legislative delegation to call for a ban on the non-therapeutic use of antibiotics in livestock agriculture in Wisconsin.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be sent to Senator Ron Johnson, Senator Tammy Baldwin, Representative Mark Pocan, and the Dane County state legislative delegation.