Allegan County 4-H Market Livestock Project

Quality Assurance

Purpose: To provide a wholesome product to the consumer by educating 4-H market livestock project members and leaders on how to reduce drug residues and increase food safety awareness.

Everyone is responsible for food safety. Each segment relies on all other segments to make sure food remains safe. Producers, like yourselves, start the cycle by raising market animals that are free from drug residues by correctly using animal health products (like wormers) and medicated feeds. They also properly transport and care for the animal until it is marketed. At the packing plant, the packer harvests and processes the product. Finally, the product reaches the consumer, who also has responsibility for food safety. Consumers should properly store meat, for example, keeping hamburger or chicken in the refrigerator or freezer to keep it safe, and by properly cooking meat and poultry.

Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points

Under this program it is the producer’s responsibility to supply the packer with animals that are free from drug and chemical residues and physical hazards (broken needles). Slaughter plants are now responsible to monitor and guarantee the safety and wholesomeness of their products.

Drug Residue - What Is It?

When an animal is given a drug, that drug is distributed throughout the animal’s body. The drug can be found in the blood, the organs, muscles, and fat. Certain organs break down the drug so that it can be flushed out of the body. Depending on the kind of drug, this breakdown and elimination process may take hours, days, or weeks before the last bit of drug has disappeared from the body. When sufficient time hasn’t passed for the entire drug to be eliminated, a small amount of drug still lingers in the tissues. This is called a drug residue.

What You Can Do to Prevent Drug Residue:

- Follow recommended withdrawal times on drug, wormer, and feed labels. Not waiting long enough to sell an animal after it was treated is one way to cause a drug residue.
- Clean feeders after you are done with medicated feeds, before starting on non-medicated feed.
- Learn & practice proper injection techniques with proper dosage and location. Because muscle has a good blood supply, this site is often indicated when it is important for a drug to rapidly absorb. Many antibiotics are given in the muscle (intramuscular, IM) because we want the drug to act rapidly. Because the tissue under the skin has a poor blood supply, this site is often indicated when we want the drug to have a prolonged effect. Many vaccines are given under the skin (subcutaneous, SC) because we want a long duration of immunity.
- Purchase disposable needles so you don’t have to worry about sanitizing or re-using them. Check needles for “Burrs”. Never straighten a bent needle, if it bends throw it away. Dispose of needles in a correct container.
- Follow storage and care of drugs. If directions say to use entire bottle this means you have to use the entire bottle – it cannot be stored and used later.
ANIMAL IDENTIFICATION
All 4-H Market Livestock must have an ear tag, tattoo or leg band. These are available from the MSUE office through your 4-H Leader. This will make it easier for you to keep records on treated animals so you don’t mistake it for another animal. If you have a certain pen, stall or cage for animals that are being treated, or that are still in the withdrawal period, these areas should be clearly identified.

RECORDING TREATMENTS
All the following must be included:
1. Date of treatment
2. Animal treated
3. Product used
4. Amount administered
5. Route of administration
6. Who gave the drug
7. Withdrawal time
8. Completed withdrawal date

Labeled Use:
Using the drug EXACTLY as it is specified on this label. Medicated feed may only be used as directed by the label. Labeled use is legal and the type most producers use!

Off Label:
The PRODUCER uses drugs on their own in a manner other than what is stated on the label without veterinarian guidance. This is ILLEGAL!!

Extra Label:
The VETERINARIAN prescribes a drug to be used in a manner other than what’s on the label. This is legal and is used when a good veterinarian-client-patient relationship exists.

Read and follow label directions carefully: Whenever you give a drug to your pig, it should be given exactly like the label or veterinarian says.

There are some drugs that are illegal to use in food animals, There are NO exceptions to this rule. These drugs are: chloramphenicol, ipronidazole, diethystilbestrol, ronidazole, dimetridazole, clenbuterol, oral nitrofuran and fluoroquinolones.

Exhibitors are discouraged from using products that are not specifically labeled for use on animals. Some of these products may leave a residue on the animal after slaughter.

REMEMBER:
- If you use medicated feeds, be careful to follow labeled withdrawal times to prevent drug residues.
- Keep good records of when you mix or use feed with any medications or when you get new feed.
- Keep your records for at least one year after the feed is fed.

Acknowledgements: Information from Pork Quality Assurance (PQA) program by the National Pork Producers Council and General Principals of Food Safety in Market Livestock presentation by Tim Johnson former MSUE Livestock Agent.