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New non-antibiotic hoof care products

## New Government Targets for Antibiotic Usage on Farms

Antibiotic resistance has rightly become an important nationwide topic in recent years, with antibiotic use in both human and animal sectors under close government scrutiny.

RUMA (Responsible Use of Medicines in Agriculture) is an independent group tasked with helping to ensure the agricultural sector meets government targets set for antibiotic usage by promoting the following principles:

- **Reduce overall antibiotic usage on farm** through improved health management.
- **Minimise the use of Critically Important Antibiotics (CIA's)**, these include fluoroquinolones (Marbocyl, Baytril, Forcyl) & 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> generation cephalosporins (Excenel, Naxcel, Cobactan tubes & injection, Cephaguard DC tubes).
- **Use alternatives to antibiotics** where appropriate.
- **Use antibiotics correctly** when they are needed.
- **Measure current antibiotic usage** and use the data to identify areas where further reduction could be achieved.

Antibiotic usage (mg/kg) is measured by dividing the total milligrams (mg) of antibiotics used on farm over a 12-month period by the total kilograms (kgs) of livestock in that population.

Encouragingly antibiotic usage across all livestock sectors has reduced by **27%** in two years, and now sits below the original government target of 50 mg/kg set in 2016.

Antibiotic usage varies between sectors with pigs currently being the highest users per kg, dairy & calf rearing enterprises sitting somewhere in the middle, and sheep and suckler systems being the lowest users.

Figures of antibiotic sales made to a third of UK dairies in 2015 showed an average usage of 26.2 mg/kg, of which 1.4 mg/kg (5%) were critically important antibiotics (CIAs).



The government set new sector-specific targets for antibiotic usage at the end of 2017, which it hopes will be achieved by 2020:

Dairy = **21 mg/kg** (20% reduction), with CIAs comprising no more than **0.7 mg/kg (3%)** of total usage (50% reduction).

Beef & Sheep = **10 mg/kg** total antibiotic usage, with 50% reduction in current CIA usage.

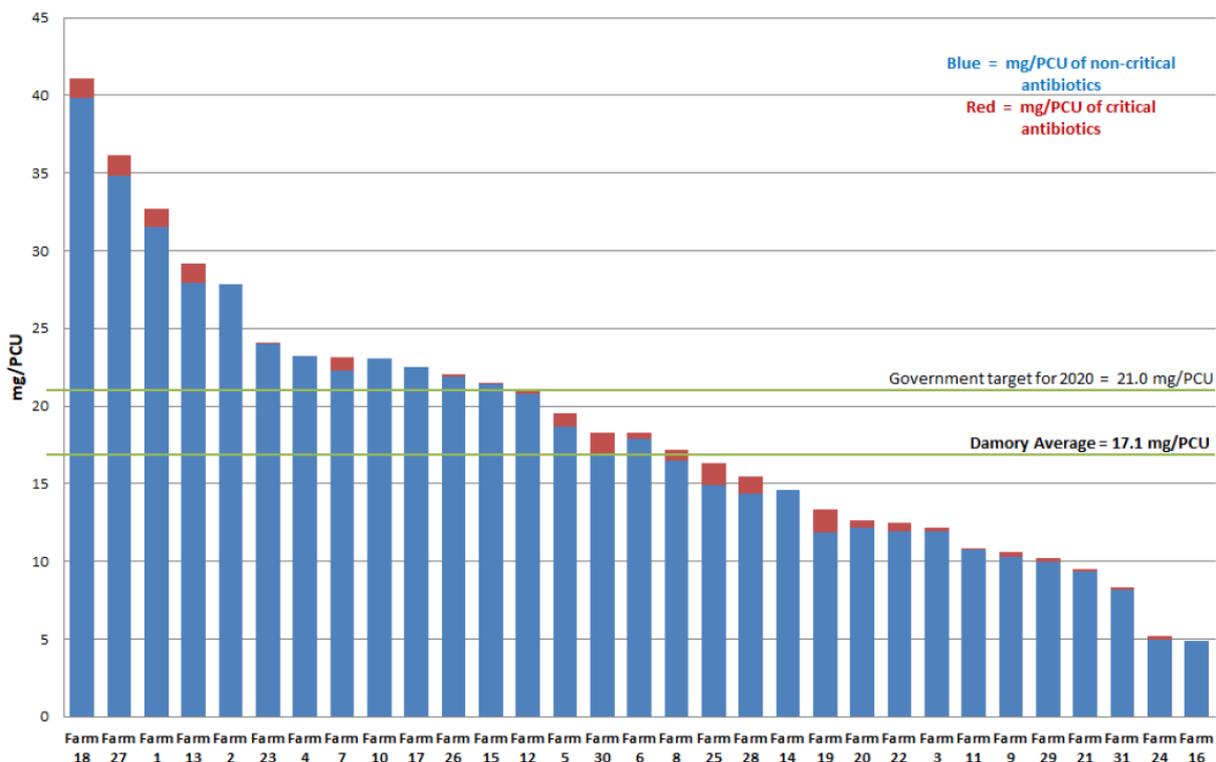
Pigs = **99 mg/kg** (a 62% reduction from the 2015 average of 263 mg/kg).

A recent study by Nottingham University analysed antibiotic sales data from the 4 largest cattle vet practices, representing 358 dairy farms (7% of English dairy cows) in order to establish an idea of current antibiotic usage levels in the dairy sector. Their results showed an average total antibiotic usage of 22.1 mg/kg, with 4.7% being CIA's, indicating many dairy farms are already close to the new targets, albeit with further reduction of CIAs required.

We have just completed a detailed antibiotic audit for all our dairies for 2017 and are delighted to find our "Damory Average" is **17.1 mg/kg** for total antibiotic usage, with **3%** being CIA's. We have also analysed a selection of our beef and sheep farms, with the majority of results already comfortably below the 2020 target of 10 mg/kg for these sectors.

These are fantastic results which our farmers and vets should be very proud of, indicating our herds & flocks are healthier than average. However there is still work to be done as some farms are currently above the 2020 targets and even low usage farms might be able to identify ways of further reducing antibiotic usage (and therefore disease costs).

**Damory Benchmarking Chart for mg/PCU - 2017**



Hoof health is an area in which we would like to see a significant reduction in unlicensed antibiotic usage. Historically, antibiotic footbaths were popular for the treatment of digital dermatitis, “DD”, but the effects were often short-lived which necessitated repeat treatments. Consequently, we used to advocate regular formalin (3-5%) footbaths but because of the associated human health concerns, this is no longer recommended.



Recent research has shown that regular monitoring for DD as cows come through the parlour and prompt treatment by lifting the foot, cleaning the lesion and topical treatment with an antibiotic spray for 3 consecutive days will “cure” the infection with a very low level of recurrence. The temptation would be to spray the lesions as the cows are being milked but it must be highlighted that using **antibiotic sprays in the parlour is strictly prohibited** as there is a very real risk of antibiotics entering the main milk line via contamination of the units and/or teats.

In answer to the above problems we have been trialling a new non-antibiotic spray, “**RepiDerma**” manufactured by Quill, with very good results so far. The product also comes as a gel which is licensed to treat DD and which seems to adhere to the lesion more effectively than sprays. Both products can be safely used in the parlour to treat active DD lesions. Furthermore, RepiDerma spray can be used on cuts, wounds, udder lesions, disbud and castration wounds.

Additionally, Quill also manufactures a **non-antibiotic footbath solution** which comes in either 20L or 200L containers. The recommended dilution is 4-5% with weekly footbathing for prevention & more frequent footbathing recommended to control DD outbreaks. We would always recommend that those cows with active lesions are separated out at milking and then allowed to walk through a freshly made up footbath solution. The footbath can then be left in situ and the remainder of the herd can be walked through this solution after milking. This arrangement will hopefully concentrate treatment efforts on those cows that need it most.



**PROMPT identification and treatment** of lesions in combination with **REGULAR foot bathing**, containing an **effective solution**, is the best course of action for controlling DD within the herd.



## “TB Update Meeting”

- Update on current TB rules & regulations
- New gamma interferon blood testing & it’s implications
- Proposed future eradication measures (e.g. cattle vaccination)
- Biosecurity measures to help protect your herd from TB

**7pm Wednesday 31<sup>st</sup> January - The Brewery Visitor Centre,  
Blandford Forum, DT11 9LS**

Free hot buffet to follow - **Please RSVP by Friday 26<sup>th</sup> January.**

## “Interherd Workshop”

- For dairy farmers who run their own Interherd programs and want to learn more about how to use Interherd to analyse herd performance.
- Anybody interested in Interherd and what it can do for your dairy also welcome.

**12-2pm Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> February – Damory Veterinary  
Clinic, Blandford Forum, DT11 7QT**

Lunch provided - **Please RSVP by Friday 9<sup>th</sup> February.**

## “A Modern Approach to Foot Care”

- Common lesions and approach to their treatment.
- Latest on effective digital dermatitis control.
- Cost of “ignoring” lame cows.

**7pm Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> February - The Brewery Visitor Centre,  
Blandford Forum, DT11 9LS**

Free hot buffet to follow - **Please RSVP by Friday 16<sup>th</sup> February.**