

# Antibiotics

## **IMPORTANCE:**

Pork producers recognize their moral obligation to provide for the well-being of their animals and to raise them in a humane and compassionate manner. Current and future availability of safe and effective animal health products are important to pork producers, who depend on these products to maintain healthy and productive animals, prevent animal suffering and ensure that consumers have access to safe and wholesome pork products.

## **BACKGROUND:**

Antibiotics have been used to treat and prevent disease or promote growth in animals for more than 50 years. Like physicians and their patients, veterinarians and their clients share responsibility for the proper use of antibiotics. Antibiotics are tools used by veterinarians and producers to quickly address clinical and sub-clinical disease and keep animals healthy and productive. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) must approve animal health drugs before they can be utilized. To win approval, a drug maker must demonstrate that the product is effective and safe for the animal and safe for the environment. FDA must also determine that new antibiotics for food animals are safe with regard to human health. FDA approves antibiotics for four purposes: treatment of illness, prevention of disease, control of disease and nutritional efficiency of animals. According to the Animal Health Institute, approximately 13 percent of animal antibiotics are used for nutritional efficiency.

## **NPPC POSITION:**

Existing FDA regulations provide adequate safeguards against antibiotic resistance. NPPC actively participates in public discussions on the use of antibiotics. Pork producers stress that animal health products, including antibiotics, must be available to maintain the health of their animals. The National Pork Board's "Take Care: Use Antibiotics Responsibly" is a program that demonstrates the pork industry's fullest intention to provide for both veterinarians and producers the principles and guidelines for guarded antibiotic use. NPPC supports research and educational programs aimed at antibiotic use for pork production. Any regulatory decisions or legislative action on antibiotic use in animals must be transparent and made based on scientific risk analysis.