

Fact Sheet

SB 416 - Antibiotics

Food animal veterinarians, through sound clinical judgment and compliance with federal, state and local laws and regulations, must be allowed to make appropriate decisions to protect the public health and food safety. This includes the use of antibiotics for treatment, prevention, or control of disease and for growth promotion/feed efficiency.

- SB 416 would not allow the use of antibiotics to prevent disease. Veterinarians would need to wait until an animal is sick before antibiotics can be used. This would seriously jeopardize the public health.
- Banning currently approved uses of antibiotics will negatively impact the safety of our food supply without any improvement to public health.
- Several farm-to-patient risk assessments have been performed that demonstrate a very low risk to human health from the use of antibiotics in food-animals, and some of the models actually predicted an *increased* human health burden if antibiotic use is withdrawn.
- Schoolchildren may be at greater risk from food borne diseases due to unsafe poultry and meat products.
- There are many challenges presented by antibiotic resistance in human medicine however scientific evidence indicates a minimal risk from the use of antibiotics in veterinary medicine.
- Antibiotic resistance is a complex problem that will not be solved by simple solutions.
- A ban on the use of antibiotics in food production animals in Denmark did not result in a significant reduction of antibiotic resistance patterns in humans and has adversely affected food safety and animal health and welfare.
- Federal laws already exist that prohibit antibiotic residues in meat and poultry products.
- Established guidelines on the use of antibiotics in food animals promote animal health and welfare in such a way that safeguards the public health and protects our food supply.
- SB 416 would prohibit “non-therapeutic” use but does not define it. This term is unclear since it has different meanings among various organizations and would lead to confusion.