

HealthforAnimals Promote the Responsible Use of Antibiotics

Brussels, 16th November 2015. The global animal medicines association, HealthforAnimals, has joined the call for global action against the growing resistance to antibiotics and other antimicrobial medicines. 16th-22nd November will see healthcare organisations around the world take part in World Antibiotic Awareness Week.

As part of their drive to raise greater awareness on the issues surrounding the use of antibiotics, and in an attempt to dispel inaccurate or misleading information HealthforAnimals' have published a guide entitled: '[Antibiotics and antibiotic resistance in veterinary science](#)' which can be freely accessed on their website: www.healthforanimals.org.

Hoping to raise awareness of the threat posed to the future health of both animals and humans, experts around the world unite in calling for greater education on the issue and its potential solutions. The World Health Organization's (WHO) campaign 'Antibiotics: Handle with Care' will draw upon the central message promoted by industry experts, that antibiotics are a precious resource and need to be preserved for future generations. Acknowledging the severity of the current situation, WHO has expressed concern ahead of awareness week, stating: "Antibiotic resistance is one of the biggest threats to global health today. It is rising to dangerously high levels in all parts of the world"ⁱⁱ

Commenting on the week's focus, Executive Director of HealthforAnimals Carel du Marchie Sarvaas stated: 'In the world of animal health, HealthforAnimals always endorses the responsible use of all veterinary medicines, including antibiotics, to be used as little as possible but as much as necessary and always under the guidance of a veterinary professional. Responsible use of antibiotics is essential to maximising their benefit, minimising adverse effects and to preserve their effectiveness. It is important to remember that antibiotic-resistant bacteria existed long before antibiotics were used in medicine. The current phenomenon of multidrug-resistant bacteria, which although of grave concern, is neither new, nor is its origin necessarily a product of human activity. Nonetheless, as a serious threat to global public and animal health, it is vital that we seek concerted action from policymakers, scientists, members of the pharmaceutical industry, vets, farmers, medical doctors, as well as the general public.'

Continuing, Mr du Marchie Sarvaas observed: "Rather than seeing all antibiotic use in the same way, it is important to remember the vital role these medicines continue to play in the health and wellbeing of animals and people around the world. It is important, as our guide demonstrates, to tackle the proliferation of misinformation that exists, as this is one key barrier to affecting change in the fight against antibiotic resistance."

Throughout the year, HealthforAnimals have released a stream of educational content including animations which can be found on their YouTube channel and interactive infographics which span a range of topics. To be the first to hear about upcoming content, follow HealthforAnimals on Twitter @Health4Animals.

For more information about the responsible use of antibiotics in veterinary medicine visit the HealthforAnimals website at: www.healthforanimals.org

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Notes for editors

HealthforAnimals' position paper: 'Global Principles and Perspectives on the Responsible Use of Medicines in Animals: [GPPRUMA]' can be freely accessed here:

<http://healthforanimals.org/global-principles-and-perspectives-on-the-responsible-use-of-medicines-in-animals-gppruma/>

HealthforAnimals' publication: 'Antibiotics and antibiotic resistance in veterinary science' can be freely accessed here: <http://healthforanimals.org/antibiotics-and-antibiotic-resistance-in-veterinary-science/>

HealthforAnimals

HealthforAnimals (formerly International Federation for Animal Health) is an organisation representing manufacturers of veterinary medicines, vaccines and other animal health products in both developed and developing countries across five continents. The mission of HealthforAnimals is to foster a greater understanding of animal health matters and promote a predictable, science-based regulatory environment that facilitates the supply of innovative and quality animal medicines, vaccines and other animal health products into a competitive market place. These products contribute to a healthy and safe food supply as well as a high standard of health and welfare for animals and people.

References

i <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/events/2015/world-antibiotic-awareness-week/event/en/> (Accessed 11/11/15)

ii <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/events/2015/world-antibiotic-awareness-week/waaw-postcard-en.pdf?ua=1>
(Accessed 11/11/15)

For further information on HealthforAnimals visit: www.healthforanimals.org

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