



Sample Procurement Policy: Purchasing Meat, Poultry, Dairy and Seafood Produced Without Inappropriate Antibiotic Use

I. POLICY

As part of its commitment to pursue practices and policies that promote a healthier environment for patients and the community at large, [INSTITUTION] will work to purchase meat, poultry, dairy and seafood (including finfish and shellfish) products produced with reduced amounts of antibiotics.

II. PURPOSE

To provide guidelines for purchasing meat, poultry and seafood products produced with reduced amounts of antibiotics. Health-care facilities purchase significant quantities of foodstuffs. Buying meat, poultry, dairy and seafood products produced with fewer antibiotics therefore helps expand the market demand for these products, stimulating production and ultimately driving prices down. The declining effectiveness of antibiotics in treating bacterial infections is a worsening crisis in human medicine. Overuse of these precious medicines drives this decline. Overuse occurs not only in human medicine, but also in agriculture. By buying foodstuffs produced with fewer antibiotics, hospitals therefore may indirectly help to keep the antibiotics used by healthcare providers more effective.

By some estimates, the *majority* of antibiotics now used in the United States are given as feed additives to livestock and poultry for "nontherapeutic" purposes – i.e. not to treat sick animals, but rather to promote slightly faster growth and to compensate for crowded, stressful, and unsanitary conditions in which animals are often raised. Most of these antibiotics are medically important, i.e., are identical to those used in human medicine or belong to classes of compounds that are used in human medicine. (As of March 2004, the following antibiotics are both approved for nontherapeutic use in animals and fall within classes of compounds approved for use in human medicine: penicillins, tetracyclines, macrolides, streptogramins, aminoglycosides, sulfonamides, bacitracin, and lincomycin (an analogue of clindamycin).)

The American Medical Association, American Public Health Association, and dozens of other health organizations have called for an end to the routine use of medically important antibiotics as nontherapeutic feed additives, while the European Union has banned use of medically important antibiotics as growth promoters and has committed to terminate use of remaining antibiotic growth promoters in 2006. In addition, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has proposed to ban use of fluoroquinolones for use in treating sick poultry based on a determination that such use contributes to

development of fluoroquinolone-resistant *Campylobacter*, a leading cause of severe food-borne illness.

For both clinical and practical reasons, these Guidelines focus on initially reducing nontherapeutic use of medically important antibiotics, and on reducing use of fluoroquinolones in poultry consistent with the FDA proposal. From a clinical perspective, medically important antibiotics are of greatest concern because resistance to them has particular impact on patient care. However, other antibiotics are also of concern, for two reasons: first, their use in animals may indirectly increase resistance to human antibiotics (because many resistance genes are linked) and second, antibiotics not currently approved for use in human medicine may one day become so (as happened in the late 1990s when a modified version of the feed additive virginiamycin was approved for human use as dalbapristin/quinupristin).

From a practical perspective, the Guidelines focus on nontherapeutic antibiotics because doing so provides an opportunity to reduce agricultural use of antibiotics substantially and quickly: nontherapeutics account for the vast majority of agricultural antibiotic use, and can be eliminated without adverse impacts by improving animal-husbandry practices. Finally, supplies of meats and poultry raised without routine nontherapeutic use of medically important antibiotics are increasingly available; in particular, such chicken is already widely available. Likewise, most major chicken producers have already announced that they have discontinued use of fluoroquinolones in chicken produced for human consumption.

III. GUIDELINES

A. Responsibilities

To minimize inappropriate use of antibiotics, personnel involved in food purchasing decisions will use these guidelines when making food-purchasing decisions involving meat, poultry, dairy, and seafood.

B. Purchasing Guidelines

In complying with this policy, [INSTITUTION] will strive to make purchases as follows

1. [Institution] will regularly and consistently inform suppliers of meat, poultry, dairy, and seafood products of their preference for purchasing products that have been produced without nontherapeutic use of antibiotics, particularly those that belong to classes of compounds approved for use in human medicine.

2. Opportunities will be prioritized as follows:.

a. Unless these products are not available to the institution because of local supply constraints, chicken will only be purchased if it has been produced:

- i. without the non-therapeutic use of antibiotics that belong to classes of compounds approved for use in human medicine; and
- ii. without any use of fluoroquinolone antibiotics.

b. Poultry other than chicken will receive a purchase preference if it has been produced without the non-therapeutic use of antibiotics, particularly those that belong to classes of compounds approved for use in human medicine.

c. Meat, dairy, and seafood products will receive a purchase preference if they have been produced without the non-therapeutic use of antibiotics, particularly those that belong to classes of compounds approved for use in human medicine.

3. [INSTITUTION] will also encourage its meat, poultry, dairy, and seafood suppliers to minimize use of antibiotics, particularly those that belong to classes of compounds approved for use in human medicine, to the extent practicable for therapy and non-routine prophylaxis.

Definitions:

Antibiotic: This policy uses the term antibiotic to have the same meaning as the more technical term "antimicrobial." Antimicrobials are substances of natural or synthetic origin that kill or inhibit the growth or multiplication of bacteria (adapted from *American Veterinary Medical Association Judicious Therapeutic Use of Antimicrobials*, <http://www.avma.org/scienact/jtua/jtua98.asp>). However, the term antibiotic does not include ionophores or other compounds from classes of drugs not used in human medicine that are used as coccidiostats.

Nontherapeutic: This policy uses the term "nontherapeutic" to mean administration of antibiotics to an animal or groups of animals for purposes other than disease therapy or non-routine disease prevention as defined herein.

Disease Therapy: The use of antibiotics, under the direction of a certified veterinarian, for the specific purpose of treating animals with an established disease or illness. Once the treatment is over and the animal is cured, the application of the antibiotic ceases. (Adapted from the World Veterinary Association's *Prudent Use of Antibiotics Global Basic Principles* and *Canadian Committee on Antibiotic Resistance*, <http://www.ccar-ccra.org/agriglos-e.htm>.)

Non-routine Disease Prevention: The use of antibiotics where it can be shown that a particular disease is present on the premises or is likely to occur because of a specific, non-customary situation. (Adapted from *WHO Global Principles for the Containment of Antimicrobial Resistance in Animals Intended for Food*, http://www.who.int/emc/diseases/zoo/who_global_principles.html.)

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