

Antibiotics

I and many others are extremely allergic to Clyndamyacin which can cause extreme diarrhoea and was banned by some in 1960.

Check Calves chapter

Farm production will have to increase to feed the increasing numbers of affluent people. Most will need meat and milk products. To achieve this, all farmers will have to be paid more for their vegetables, fruits, grains, meat and milk.

China's demand for meat is increasing by about 10% a year. Indian's milk consumption has been rising at more than a million tons per year.

In 2005 in USA, 23 million pounds of antibiotics were fed to animals and only three million pounds to people. One result is that there are now eight antibiotics that don't work for humans.

As antibiotic use increased in both animals and humans, some bacteria became resistant to the drugs given to both. There is evidence that antibiotic use in food-producing animals contributed to human resistance, although to a lesser degree than wrong human use. It is widely accepted that the primary cause is overuse and misuse of antibiotics. In some cases, doctors prescribe or patients demand the drugs too frequently, or inappropriately, such as for illnesses that are not caused by bacteria and do not respond to antibiotics. In some cases, patients don't complete the prescribed course of an antibiotic treatment, making it more likely that surviving bacteria will develop resistance to the drug.

In 1984 a study linked antibiotics in livestock and poultry feeds to resistant bacteria in humans. The resistant bacteria were found in samples from people suffering from foodborne illness.

For decades, some public health advocates have worried that feeding antibiotics to chickens may weaken the effectiveness of those drugs in people, because people get small doses of the drugs when they eat chicken and pig meats. Major producers in the poultry industry are reducing their use of antibiotics.

Antibiotics Overused in Chickens

by Rich Hayes

WASHINGTON - In chicken houses around the world millions of cramped fowls consume antibiotics that should be used to cure human illnesses, not prod chickens to fatten faster.

Until recently, there was a storehouse of antibiotics that could handily fight even the nastiest of infectious diseases. But the overuse of these miracle drugs - in hospitals, consumer products, veterinary clinics, cattle feedlots and hog and chicken factories - is resulting in the spread of super bugs doctors may be unable to cure.

Today, more than 8 billion chickens, cattle and hogs raised for the dinner table in the United States alone receive some type of antibiotic during their lifetime - not to cure disease, but to promote growth.

The Union of Concerned Scientists estimates that the total yearly use of antibiotics in healthy livestock has climbed from 16 million pounds in the mid-1980s to 25 million pounds today. About 11 million pounds of that total are used in poultry feed, 10 million pounds in hog feed and 4 million pounds in cattle feed.

By contrast, only 3 million pounds of antibiotics are used in human medicine. That means we are using eight times the amount of antibiotics in healthy animals that we use to treat diseases in our children and ourselves.

Meat producers rely on antibiotics not just because they promote growth, but because of how they promote growth. The drugs' fattening effects come mostly from bracing the chickens against the highly stressful conditions inside a chicken house. As a result, the birds reach slaughter weight on less feed. And lower feed costs mean higher company profits.

I recently toured a chicken house and saw firsthand how stressful the environment is. First, if you think chicken houses smell bad from the highway, the air inside is unbearably foul. Particles of manure and feathers hover like a fog while a pall of ammonia stings the eyes. On the ground, a sea of chickens swirls as they seek a little space, decent air and another snack. After 10 minutes in the chicken house I felt as if I needed an antibiotic.

Giving up the preventive use of antibiotics would also mean the livestock would be more likely to carry dangerous bacteria, including E. coli and salmonella. The extra bacterial contamination might very well be more dangerous to consumers than any theoretic gain in antibiotic longevity. selves.