

Appendix A

BRITISH VETERINARY POULTRY ASSOCIATION

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Antimicrobials Guidelines**Background:**

Therapeutic antimicrobial products are used by veterinary surgeons in the treatment and control of many types of infection in a wide variety of animal species. If a number of animals in a group have overt signs of disease, both sick and healthy animals may need to be treated with therapeutic levels of an antimicrobial product for the recommended period. This is intended to cure the clinically affected animals, reduce the spread of disease and prevent clinical signs appearing in the remainder.

Antimicrobial resistance is a natural phenomenon which is an inherent risk associated with any use of antimicrobial medication in any species. Opinion is currently divided on the practical effects of any resistance associated with antimicrobial use in animals on human health. However, measures aimed at limiting the development of resistance are important for prolonging the useful life of all antimicrobials in both human and animal medicine.

Antimicrobial substances used for digestive enhancement, are administered in small amounts in the feed. Their use has been carefully controlled in the UK for over 20 years,

and the principles laid down by the Swann committee have now been incorporated in European regulations. These products are used in livestock production with a view to improving the efficiency of conversion digestion of animal feeds. In addition they may have important ecological benefits and may reduce the prevalence of certain diseases.

Guiding Principles:

1. Therapeutic antimicrobial products should not be used as an alternative to good management, vaccination, or site hygiene.
2. All prescribing of antimicrobials should be for animals under the care of the prescribing veterinarian as defined in the RCVS Code of Conduct, and expanded on in the BVPA Code (1). All prescription-only medicines should be supplied with a prescription or direction, a copy of which should be retained by the prescriber for at least 3 years.
3. The use of therapeutic antimicrobial products in the absence of clinical disease or specific pathogenic infections