

# Media Release



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NPA PRESS RELEASE

## **City & Guilds promotes importance of responsible antibiotic usage**

The importance of using antibiotics responsibly on farms is being championed by City & Guilds, a leading body in skills development.

City & Guilds has updated its Safe Use of Veterinary Medicines Certificate of Competence to reflect the growing awareness around the UK livestock sector of the need to respond to the antibiotic challenge.

This qualification, which is open to anybody who works with agricultural livestock, helps ensure best practice is always followed while recognising the suitability of individuals to safely and effectively provide basic treatments.

Following lengthy discussions with National Pig Association (NPA) vice chairman Richard Longthorp, City & Guilds has added new elements to the qualification.

With an overarching emphasis on replacing, reducing, refining antibiotic usage to reduce the risk of antibiotic resistance in farm animals and the human population, they cover:

- How antimicrobial resistance arises and spreads, and how to avoid it
- Avoiding routine use of antibiotics and ensuring they are not normally the first option
- Recognising the importance of diagnostics, biosecurity and good management in controlling disease
- Recognising when antibiotics are likely to be ineffective, for example against viruses and when resistance is present
- Why 'critically important antibiotics' should be used only as a last-resort.

City & Guilds is now republishing its handbook to reflect the additional requirements and has informed its assessment centres of the changes.

Mr. Longthorp, a Yorkshire farmer and strong advocate of developing effective training to deliver better outcomes on farms, welcomed the move.

He said: "We are delighted the guidance has been updated. This means all people who work with livestock now have training and certification available to them that recognises the significant and growing challenge of using antibiotics responsibly.

“The pig sector is already making great strides in rising to the challenge and this is yet another tool in the armoury to demonstrate our professional approach to safe and responsible use of veterinary medicines.”

Long-term targets for reducing and refining antibiotic usage are in the process of being developed for the UK livestock sectors, under the leadership of the Responsible Use of Medicines in Agriculture (RUMA) alliance.

In further positive news for the pig sector, uptake for the eMB-Pigs database, which records antibiotic usage on farms, has increased significantly during the early part of 2017.

The latest figures from AHDB Pork show data covering 36 per cent of UK production is now on the system, almost double the figure recorded before Christmas.

Red Tractor Assurance has confirmed that recording antibiotic usage data on eMB-Pigs on a quarterly basis will become a requirement of the Red Tractor pork scheme later this year.

NPA senior policy advisor Georgina Crayford said: “Our Antibiotic Stewardship Programme sets out a holistic approach to addressing the antibiotic problem that puts education and recording of data to the fore, alongside practical means to reduce usage on farms.

“These latest developments highlight the excellent progress being made across the pig supply chain.”

#### **Notes to editors**

- 1) City & Guilds is a global leader in skills development, providing services to training providers, employers, and trainees across a variety of sectors
- 2) The Safe Use of Veterinary Medicines Certificate of Competence is an independently assessed City & Guilds/NTPC Level 2 Award covering all elements of administering veterinary medicine, including storage, transportation, disposal and record-keeping. For more information, [click here](#)
- 3) The NPA’s Antibiotic Stewardship Programme, launched in May 2016, includes measures on capture and collation of accurate antibiotic use data; benchmarking farms’ antibiotic usage; education in effective disease control strategies; reducing antibiotic use, consistent with responsible animal medicine and promoting prescribing principles to strictly limit use of ‘critically important antibiotics’. For more information [click here](#)
- 4) The latest [official Government figures](#) showed sales of antibiotics licensed for pigs and poultry were down 10 per cent in 2015 while sales of products licensed for pigs only were down 24 per cent.
- 5) For more on last week’s Red Tractor announcement, [click here](#)

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