

Media Release



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Pig producers make outstanding progress in recording use of antibiotics

In less than two months, antibiotic data for over 1.2m pigs has already been contributed by pig producers to the British pig industry's new on-line medicine book.

This represents nearly a third of the national growing and finishing herd and shows outstanding progress in the sector's commitment to record, benchmark and control its use of antibiotics, says Dr Georgina Crayford, who leads the National Pig Association's recently-launched Pig Industry Antibiotic Stewardship Programme.

"The levy-funded on-line electronic medicine book is the most important strand of the Stewardship Programme," she said. "It will allow the industry to capture and collate accurate antibiotic-use data, and this will be followed by benchmarking of each farm's antibiotic use against other farms of a similar type."

NPA recognises and shares society's concerns about the level of antibiotic use in human and livestock medicine, and it acknowledges some risk of antibiotic resistance developing in bacteria in pigs and this resistance spreading to humans.

It is urging all producers to contribute antibiotic data to the electronic medicine book, developed by the levy body AHDB Pork in association with the Veterinary Medicines Directorate, and launched April 20 with the support of the Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales levy bodies.

"Recognising and addressing society's concerns about antimicrobial resistance is one of the most important challenges the pig industry has ever faced and collecting accurate data on current use is pivotal to the industry Stewardship Programme," said Georgina Crayford.

Other actions that will flow from Stewardship Programme include:

- To extend education in effective disease control strategies.
- To promote veterinary prescribing principles to strictly limit the use of antibiotics of critical importance to human health.

Pig producers can contribute data to the "e-Med Book" via the industry's Pig Hub (which they already use to record all pig movements). A guide to using the electronic medicine book can be found here: <http://pork.ahdb.org.uk/media/271609/b9931-emb-quick-guide.pdf>. To date, data for 1,240,000 growing/finishing herd pigs has been entered, along with data for 37,000 sows.

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