

National Post, Letter-to-the-editor, March 21, 2013,

Ban animal antibiotics

Fleming's 1945 Nobel Laureate speech, "Penicillin," warned that subtherapeutic doses of antibiotics create lethal resistant bacteria.

J. Conly, Chairman of the Committee on Antibiotic Resistance in Canada wrote that 1/2 of therapeutic antibiotics in the USA are prescribed by veterinarians (CMAJ, 2002). Not included was the massive amount of subtherapeutic antibiotics used in factory livestock operations.

Subtherapeutic doses (including antibiotics used only in animals) kill the weakest of bacteria, leaving antibiotic resistant bacteria in the manure – new stronger strains, some now producing toxins. Manure is spread on fields and contaminates crops and water drainage. Scandinavia eliminated factory farm antibiotics in 1996, with no net economic consequences to farmers. Bacteria not exposed to sub-therapeutic antibiotics lose much of their acquired antibiotic resistance in a few years because of the innumerable reproductive cycles occurring without antibiotic exposure.

Public health demands that farm antibiotics as animal growth stimulation should be forbidden.

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