

HOW ANTIBIOTICS ARE USED IN THE LIVESTOCK INDUSTRY

Not all antibiotics are created equally, there are four different categories that an antibiotic can be placed in, and it is based on the importance to human medicine. Antibiotics also have different uses depending on the situation of the animal's health.

CATEGORY 1

These antibiotics have a VERY HIGH importance in human medicine
*rarely used in livestock

CATEGORY 2

These antibiotics have a HIGH importance in human medicine
*sometimes used in livestock

CATEGORY 3

These antibiotics have a MEDIUM importance in human medicine
*commonly used in livestock

CATEGORY 4

These antibiotics have a LOW importance in human medicine
*most used in livestock

THERAPEUTIC

This is when the antibiotic is used as a treatment for a sick animal or to treat a batch of animals when there is a disease outbreak

PREVENTATIVE

This is when antibiotics are given to animals to prevent an outbreak of a disease. This is a common practice in a feedlot setting.

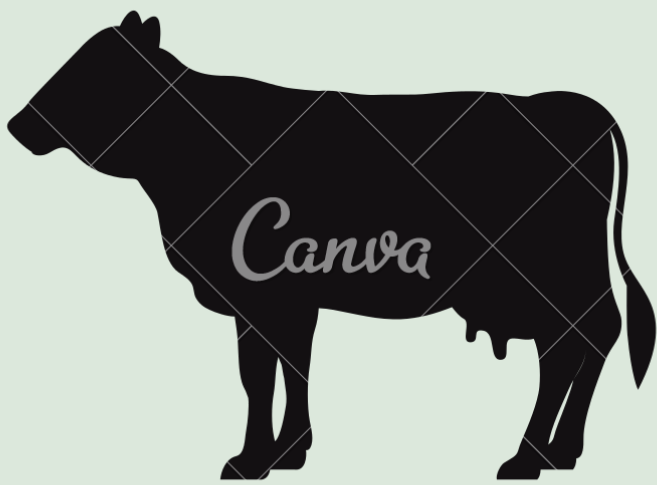
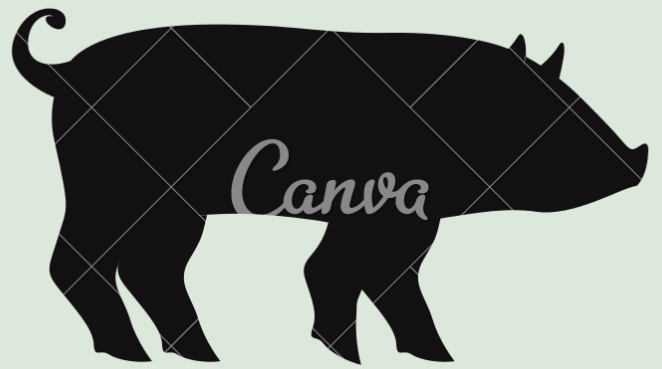
SUB-THERAPEUTIC

A type of antibiotic called ionophores are used to promote growth and feed efficiency. These antibiotics are not used at all in human medicine.

Hormones by industry

Not all industries within the livestock sector use hormones in their animals. In some industries it is not allowed and in others, hormones for that animal don't even exist.

In the pork industry there are no hormones that are licensed for the use in pork production. Meat is federally inspected on a random basis to insure pork is hormone free.



The beef industry uses hormone implants to improve the growth rate of the animal. The implant supplements the natural hormones the animal already has to direct growth to muscle and not fat. The end result is less feed used for weight gain.

Hormone use in the poultry industry has not been allowed for over 50 years. The poultry industry uses careful breeding practices and genetics to maximize growth rates. Hormones have a negative impact on birds and would be very difficult to administer to each chicken.



The use of synthetic growth hormones in the dairy industry to increase a cow's milk production are not allowed in Canada. All Alberta dairy farmers are part of a mandatory Canadian Quality Milk Program. No dairy product produced in Canada contains hormones.