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## NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### Canada's veterinarians call for national all-species antibiotic stewardship strategy

OTTAWA – Veterinary and human health doctors gathered at the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association's (CVMA) Summit of Veterinary Leaders to share knowledge about antibiotic resistance, one of the most serious global threats to human and animal health in the 21st century.

“Information shared during the Summit reaffirmed that Canada must implement an all-species, all-sector strategy that includes agriculture, veterinary medicine and human medicine in order to address the growing concerns surrounding antibiotic use and the risks of resistance,” said CVMA president, Dr. Jean Gauvin.

Dr. John Prescott, a veterinary bacteriologist at the Ontario Veterinary College, said during the Summit that he believes Canada is in a “golden moment” to improve antibiotic stewardship. Dr. Prescott recommends a coordinated national and provincial framework for countering resistance that involves chief veterinary officers and chief medical officers working together, closing regulatory loopholes and implementing a comprehensive national surveillance system that will accurately track the use of antibiotic products.

While CVMA is encouraged by Health Canada's recent announcement of a phase-out of growth promotion uses for antibiotics in Canada, CVMA supports further regulatory changes that will provide increased veterinary oversight of antibiotic drug use in Canada. Regulatory gaps (e.g., Health Canada's Own-Use Importation policy) allow unknown quantities of unapproved antibiotics to be brought into Canada and used in animals, including those raised for human consumption. Such regulatory gaps currently do not allow Canada to have effective control over antibiotic use in animals and pose potential threats to the health of Canadians and animals.

The responsible use of antibiotics is a priority issue for CVMA. CVMA holds that the continued use of antibiotics in veterinary medicine is dependent on the professions ability to use antibiotics responsibly, striking a balance between maximizing animal health and welfare, while preserving the effectiveness of antibiotic products and protecting public health.

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*The Canadian Veterinary Medical Association (CVMA) is the national body representing and serving the interests of the veterinary profession in Canada. To learn more about CVMA's Summit of Veterinary Leaders, visit <http://www.canadianveterinarians.net/summit-of-veterinary-leaders>.*

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