Drug import rules the next step in antimicrobial campaign

Health Canada is limiting the drugs that farmers can legally import to treat sick livestock with a number of exceptions

BY ALEX BINKLEY

Ontario Farmer

Health Canada nas canal several long-promised Tealth Canada has taken steps toward implementing its Pan-Canadian Framework to combat antimicrobial resistance (AMR) by limiting the use of human crucial medicines in agriculture production.

Farmers will no longer be able to import antimicrobial drugs to treat sick livestock although they will still be able to bring in limited quantities of medicines the department has determined do not pose a risk to human health or food safety.

At the same time, it will allow manufacturers to import and sell low-risk veterinary health products, such as vitamin and mineral supplements, for companion and food-producing animals.

animals healthy and may reduce the need for antimicrobials, it said.

The announcement was made in the middle of the 2017 World Antibiotic Awareness Week.

Duane Landals, past president of the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association, said then Health Canada announcements are "specific regulatory changes we have expected."

"In previous statements we have endorsed them along with the policy change to make all medically important antimicrobials prescription only and the voluntary removal of all growth promotion claims," from veterinary medicines.

He recently told the Commons health committee that framework are specific comthe CVMA has been urging the federal government for 20 These treatments can keep years to make "regulatory and

...it will allow manufacturers to import and sell lowrisk veterinary health products, such as vitamin and mineral supplements...

policy changes to enhance the responsible use of antimicrobial drugs."

The CVMA has worked with the National Farmed Animal Health and Welfare Council and Antimicrobial Stewardship Canada that have developed AMR use strategies, he said.

Canadian Animal Health Institute, said the policy for months.

outcomes.

The department is discuss- other treatments."

ing its plans with vets and livestock groups.

The framework was first announced almost two years ago to guide collective action in tackling AMR in Canada under the pillars of surveillance, stewardship, infection prevention and control, and research and innovation.

It's part of an international campaign to reduce the use of human crucial medicines in treating livestock and companion animals to try to slow the spread of AMR.

Without action, the World Health Organization fears 10 million people could die annually by 2050 from diseases resistant to existing medicines Jean Szkotnicki, head of the surpassing the deaths from

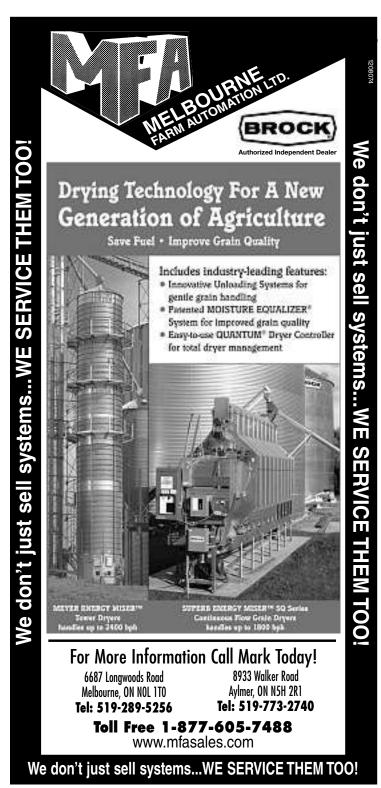
Health Canada says antichanges have been expected microbials "are an essential tool against infections in Still to come from Health both humans and animals, Canada in the roll-out of the but they are losing their effectiveness more quickly mitments and measurable than we are identifying and developing new drugs or

The CVMA is updating its guidelines for antimicrobial use to assist producers in meeting federal expectations. It also wants to encourage consistent veterinary practices across the country.

Landis noted that both the World Organisation for Animal Health and the World Health Organization "have stressed the importance of raising awareness of the health risks posed by antibiotic resistance and to promote good practice in this area of concern, to limit the emergence and spread of resistant bacteria throughout the world."

It also endorses One Health as "an approach to medicine that recognizes that the health of humans, animals and the environment are inextricably linked."

"Veterinarians and registered veterinary technicians/ technologists play a key role in improving the health and welfare of the animals they treat in a manner that supports One Health."





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