



## **Community Council Newsletter**

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Hello Everyone,

Weather conditions over the past year have dramatically affected farming in Ohio. Let's take a minute to look at an issue that's impacting a lot of Farm Bureau members, our friends and neighbors.

### ***USDA Declares All 88 Ohio Counties Disaster Areas***

Farmers in all of Ohio's 88 counties in Ohio are eligible to apply for emergency loans following a series of natural disasters since November 2018, culminating in a disastrous planting season this spring. USDA disaster designation makes farm operators in primary and contiguous counties eligible to be considered for certain assistance from the Farm Service Agency, which may include Farm Service Agency emergency loans. More information can be found on the Farm Bureau website at: <https://ofbf.org/2019/10/11/88-ohio-counties-officially-declared-disaster-areas/>

### ***Programs Bring Addressing Farm Stress to the Forefront***

With the kickoff of the [#gotyourback](#) campaign, the Ohio Department of Agriculture is moving the topic of mental health on the farm forward. The initiative, of which Ohio Farm Bureau is a proud partner, was created to let farmers know they are not alone in their struggles and to give them resources to seek professional, confidential help. More information is available at: <https://ofbf.org/2019/09/06/bringing-mental-health-to-the-forefront/>

Listen to Farm Bureau State Trustee, Nathan Brown discuss the issue on *Field Day with Jordan Hoewischer* at: <https://soundcloud.com/ohio-farm-bureau/field-day-with-jordan-hoewischer-episode-17-nathan-brown>

The enclosed packet has two new discussion guides, both which feature issues briefings directly from American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) policy. These topics that should give your group a few options for their meetings into late fall. Topics for discussion include:

### ***Preserving Access to Antibiotics***

Agriculture has a primary interest in ensuring that all animal health products continue to be safe and effective. In order to raise healthy animals, farmers and ranchers need tools to keep animals healthy—including antibiotics or antimicrobials that have been approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Eliminating access to these important tools will jeopardize animal health and compromise our ability to raise animals to provide safe meat, milk, and egg products.

Given agriculture's need for effective animal health and disease prevention, what impact do you see when advertising claims such as, "free from antibiotics" are used in the media? Do you feel these food products have some "value added trait," or is a message sent accusing some producers of misapplying this disease management tool? What would be the impact (positive or negative) of antibiotic and antimicrobial use on local agriculture?

Additional information/materials on this subject:

- *OFBF Website – The Truth of Dairy Farms - An Insider's Perspective:* When you google the words 'dairy industry' a lot of very opinionated information comes back at to you. Learn more about dairy farming from Danielle Burch and her husband, Andy as they operate a 70 cow dairy farm in Columbiana County. Story access at: <https://ofbf.org/2017/07/13/truth-dairy-farms-insiders-perspective/>
- *Center for Science in the Public Interest Nutrition Action Website – Are Antibiotics in Meat a Food Safety Issue:* While it is appropriate for farmers and ranchers to use antibiotics to treat sick animals, other uses are risky. Explore more about the Center's viewpoint at: <https://www.nutritionaction.com/daily/food-safety/are-antibiotics-in-meat-a-food-safety-issue/>
- *US Food & Drug Administration Website – Antibiotics and Antibiotic Resistance:* Today, almost all important bacterial infections in the United States and throughout the world are becoming resistant to antibiotics. Antibiotic resistance has been called one of the world's most pressing public health problems. The smart use of antibiotics is the key to controlling the spread of resistance. More information at: <https://www.fda.gov/drugs/buying-using-medicine-safely/antibiotics-and-antibiotic-resistance>
- *World Health Organization (WHO) Website – Antimicrobial Resistance in the Food Chain:* The most effective way to prevent the transmission of antimicrobial-resistant bacteria from food-producing animals to humans is by preventing the emergence and dissemination of antimicrobial-resistant bacteria in food-producing animals. Read more about UN policy and the issue at: [https://www.who.int/foodsafety/areas\\_work/antimicrobial-resistance/amrfoodchain/en/](https://www.who.int/foodsafety/areas_work/antimicrobial-resistance/amrfoodchain/en/)

### ***Food Safety and Labeling***

American consumers deserve to have confidence that their food is safe and that the best science is used to ensure that the most wholesome product possible is produced and offered and America's farmers and ranchers are committed to producing safe and affordable food for consumers in the U.S. and around the world.

Numerous nationwide food recalls have increased consumer awareness of food safety. At issue is whether the current food safety system has the resources, authority and structural organization to safeguard the health of American consumers against foodborne illness. Also at issue is whether federal food safety laws have kept pace with significant changes in food production, processing and marketing, such as new food sources, advances in production and distribution methods, and the growing volume of imports.

Have you ever seen an advertising or marketing campaign take advantage of a food safety issue to promote consumer choice in supporting their product? How could these campaign impact (positive and negative) farmer relationships with the community? Should food safety issues be addressed by several agencies as detailed in this background, or should one agency take the lead in addressing food safety and handling issues?

Additional information/materials on this subject:

- *OFBF Website Podcast – Legal with Leah, Cottage Foods*: If you're selling foods from your home kitchen, there are some state regulations you should know about. Farm Bureau policy counsel Leah Curtis helps keep you legal. Access the podcast at: <https://ofbf.org/2018/12/13/legal-leah-cottage-foods/>
- *OFBF Website – Rethinking “Processed” Foods*: The next time you hear the phrase “processed food” used as a criticism of our modern food culture, think about Bob Bowers, Jr. and his third generation cider mill in Hocking County. Continue reading the story at: <https://ofbf.org/2017/01/04/rethinking-processed-foods/>
- *OFBF Website – Meat and Poultry Labeling Terms*: Get a first person primer on USDA terminology from Farm Bureau Organization Director, active food shopper and mom, Mandy Orahoad. Story access at: <https://ofbf.org/2018/11/13/meat-poultry-labeling-terms/>
- *Food Processing Website – A Closer Look at 2019’s Food Safety and Regulation Issues*: From the perspective of what is good for the body is good for the planet, millennials expect companies to make a difference, not just to make products and money, thus there is an increased demand for “healthier,” “cleaner” foods (real, minimally processed, organic, closer to “natural”). Read the full article at: <https://www.foodprocessing.com/articles/2019/food-safety-and-regulation-issues/>

**Remember, you are not limited to these materials** - Feel free to discuss additional topics and issues generated from the local newspaper, other publications and/or key events happening in your neighborhood. Additional information on possible discussion topics and resources can be found on the Ohio Farm Bureau Federation website at <https://ofbf.org/2015/11/23/what-are-community-councils/>

### ***Keep in Touch with Farm Bureau***


Need some additional help? Contact your county Farm Bureau office for assistance. Please let Amy Hurst know if you need more forms or have questions via e-mail at [ahurst@ofbf.org](mailto:ahurst@ofbf.org) or by phone at 614.246.8262.

Remember to send your council meeting forms and correspondence directly to your county Farm Bureau.

Many of Farm Bureau's action plans started with conversation around a kitchen table, living room or front porch; lively discussion continues to develop using web applications, too. Your participation as a community council member makes sure that our organization continues to focus on critical issues, create better policy and helps people work together to get things done.

We look forward to visiting with you in the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dale R. Arnold" followed by a horizontal line.

Dale Arnold  
Director, Energy, Utility & Local Government Policy  
Ohio Farm Bureau Federation



# POWER Communication

*Policy Outreach and Effective Results*

## POLICY AND ISSUE DISCUSSION SHEET

### **Preserving Access to Antibiotics**

#### *AFBF Issues Briefing*

Agriculture has a primary interest in ensuring that all animal health products continue to be safe and effective. In order to raise healthy animals, farmers and ranchers need tools to keep animals healthy—including antibiotics or antimicrobials that have been approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Eliminating access to these important tools will jeopardize animal health and compromise our ability to raise animals to provide safe meat, milk, and egg products.

#### *Policy Backgrounder*

Bacterial resistance to certain antibiotics poses a serious public health threat and prompts wide concern for human health. While all users of antimicrobials contribute to risk of resistance, antibiotic use in animals has not currently been definitively linked to increases in human antibiotic resistance.

Since 2012, the FDA has issued three documents to guide the agency's strategy for antibiotic use in food animals. Guidance for Industry (GFI) #209 outlines resistance issues and identifies judicious use principles for medically important antimicrobials in food-producing animals including limiting use to therapeutic purposes and calling for veterinarian oversight. GFI #213 calls for drug companies to voluntarily remove production claims (growth promotion and feed efficiency) on medically important antimicrobials delivered by feed or water and brings therapeutic uses (treatment, prevention, and control) of those drugs under veterinarian oversight. GFI #120 implements a Veterinary Feed Directive (VFD) to fulfill the veterinarian oversight provisions outlined in GFI #213. The VFD compliance deadline was Jan. 1, 2017. Injectable or oral drugs are not affected by these changes.

According to FDA, the agency is taking this series of actions to preserve the effectiveness of medically important antimicrobials for treating disease in humans. Animal production claims (growth promotion and feed efficiency) will be prohibited for these shared-class drugs, but veterinarian oversight will allow for continued use to prevent, control or treat illnesses in food-producing animals.

In Sept. 2014, the President's Council on Advisors on Science and Technology (PCAST) released a report on resistance to antibiotics. In the report, PCAST recommends a set of practical and actionable steps that the government should take in human and animal health to bring the antibiotic-resistance crisis under control through focused efforts in three areas:

- 1) Improving surveillance of the rise of antibiotic-resistant bacteria to enable effective response, stop outbreaks, and limit the spread of antibiotic-resistant organisms.
- 2) Increasing the longevity of current antibiotics by improving the appropriate use of existing antibiotics, preventing the spread of antibiotic-resistant bacteria and scaling-up proven interventions to decrease the rate at which microbes develop resistance to current antibiotics.
- 3) Increasing the rate at which new antibiotics (as well as other interventions) are discovered and developed.

In conjunction with the report, an Executive Order from the Obama administration required that a Task Force for Combating Antimicrobial Resistant Bacteria be co-chaired by the secretaries of the Departments of Defense, Agriculture, and Health & Human Services to identify actions to provide for the facilitation and monitoring of implementation of the National Strategy for Combating Antibiotic-Resistant Bacteria.

#### *AFBF Policy on Antimicrobials*

It is important that decision-makers review demonstrated scientific evidence of the risks and benefits of potential actions regulating the use of antimicrobial products. Farm Bureau has serious concerns about the impact of removing important antimicrobials from the market, which would hinder efforts of veterinarians and livestock and poultry producers to ensure animal health and protect our nation's food supply. We favor judicious use and withdrawal restrictions of feed additives and therapeutics, and we oppose banning these animal health products.

#### *OFBF Policy on Animal Health*

OFBF supports a voluntary animal disease traceability system capable of providing support for animal disease control and eradication. Any such program must protect farmer from liability for acts of others after livestock leaves the farmer's hands.

The Ohio Department of Agriculture should have authority and funding necessary to rapidly respond to animal diseases or bioterrorism and adequate staff or contracted services to do so. There should be collaborative diagnostic work and cost savings programs between the Ohio Department of Agriculture and The Ohio State University College of Veterinary Medicine.

We oppose reclassifying certain commonly used animal health products as prescription and/or controlled drugs.

#### *Discussion Questions*

1. *You're a farmer, you must know something about this...* How many of your council members have been approached by a friend, neighbor or community member about the use of antibiotics and animal health? Do the questions stem from the person wanting some additional information/insight you might be able to provide, or in some way do they feel you have some responsibility for impacting (positive or negative) the issue?
2. What farming and agribusiness operations in your area have an important stake in maintaining animal health on their operations? Do you see any differences between larger and smaller animal husbandry operations? What best management practices do you think each has in place when it comes to disease control? Are antibiotics and antimicrobials a major part of their strategy?
3. Given agriculture's need for effective animal health and disease prevention, what impact do you see when advertising claims such as, "free from antibiotics" are used in the media? Do you feel these food products have some "value added trait," or is a message sent accusing some producers of misapplying this disease management tool? What would be the impact (positive or negative) of antibiotic and antimicrobial use on local agriculture?



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## POLICY AND ISSUE DISCUSSION SHEET

### **Food Safety and Labeling**

#### *AFBF Issues Briefing*

American consumers deserve to have confidence that their food is safe and that the best science is used to ensure that the most wholesome product possible is produced and offered.

America's farmers and ranchers are committed to producing safe and affordable food for consumers in the U.S. and around the world. There are several reasons for their strong support for food safety. They have the same desire as other consumers to have a safe, abundant and affordable food supply. They also have an economic interest because the demand for their products is determined by consumer confidence.

Numerous nationwide food recalls have increased consumer awareness of food safety. At issue is whether the current food safety system has the resources, authority and structural organization to safeguard the health of American consumers against foodborne illness. Also at issue is whether federal food safety laws have kept pace with significant changes in food production, processing and marketing, such as new food sources, advances in production and distribution methods, and the growing volume of imports.

#### *Policy Backgrounder*

The Government Accountability Office (GAO) has identified 15 federal agencies that administer at least 30 laws related to food safety. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA), within the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), and the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS), within the Department of Agriculture (USDA), handle most of the government's food and safety regulatory system.

FDA is responsible for ensuring that all domestic and imported food products —except for most meat and poultry derived from the major animal species — are safe, nutritious, wholesome and accurately labeled. FDA shares responsibility for the safety of eggs with FSIS.

FSIS regulates the safety, wholesomeness and proper labeling of most domestic and imported meat and poultry and their products sold for human consumption. FSIS inspects all cattle, sheep, swine, goats and horses before and after they are slaughtered. FSIS also maintains oversight during meat and poultry processing into food products.

#### *Regulatory Status*

On January 4, 2011, President Obama enacted the FDA Food Safety Modernization Act (P.L. 111-353). The legislation approved by Congress in 2010 aims to cooperatively improve food safety, building on existing systems already in place in the private sector. It authorizes new resources to increase risk-based inspections, expand research and training programs, and establish a pilot program for high-risk produce traceability.

FDA has finalized all seven major rules — Produce Safety, Preventive Controls for Human Food, Preventive Controls for Animal Food, Foreign Supplier Verification Programs, Third Party Certification, Sanitary Transportation and Intentional Adulteration. Now, FDA is in the process of implementing these rules, issuing guidance and training curriculum.

### *AFBF Policy*

Farm Bureau believes that any action by Congress should be based on sound science and prudent risk assessment.

Farm Bureau believes that USDA should be designated as the lead agency in the development of food safety guidelines.

Farm Bureau supports the following changes to improve the food safety regulatory process for consumers and producers:

- Adequate funding of the government's food and feed safety and protection functions;
- Increased education and training for inspectors;
- Additional science-based inspection, targeted according to risk;
- Research and development of scientifically based rapid testing procedures and tools;
- Increased funding for the Food Animal Residue Avoidance Databank;
- Accurate and timely responses to outbreaks that identify contaminated products, remove them from the market and minimize disruption to producers;
- Indemnification for producers who suffer marketing losses due to inaccurate government-advised recalls or warnings; and
- Point of entry inspections being in addition to "processing plant," "field" or other required U.S. government inspections in countries of product origin that should be funded through user fees paid by the importer.

### *Discussion Questions*

1. *You're a farmer, you must know something about this...* How many of your council members have been approached by a friend, neighbor or community member about a food safety recall in the news? Do the questions stem from the person wanting some additional information/insight you might be able to provide, or in some way do they feel you have some responsibility in causing the issue?
2. Where do you feel most food safety issues impacting your community originate – National recalls concerning products bought and sold through major supermarket chains and/or other sources using nation/regional distribution outlets to source inventory, or more local outlets sourcing materials from area producers?
3. What products do you see involved in recalls – Boxed, prepackaged and/or fresh source dairy, egg, meats and vegetables coming from international and national outlets, or similar product offerings from regional and/or local sources?
4. Have you ever seen an advertising or marketing campaign take advantage of a food safety issue to promote consumer choice in supporting their product? How could these campaign impact (positive and negative) farmer relationships with the community?
5. Who should have jurisdictional authority when it comes to addressing food safety and handling issues? Should food safety issues be addressed by several agencies as detailed in this backgrounder, or should one agency take the lead in addressing food safety and handling issues? What should be USDA's role?