DID YOU KNOW?

- All condemned animals are tested for residues
- In 2018, 87.1% of Drug Residues in MN were from the Dairy Industry
- In 2018, the majority of these residues were from Penicillin and Cephalosporin drugs such as Excede, Excenel, Naxcel and Ceftiflex

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Avoiding Drug Residues in Meat

Because drug residues in meat have important food safety considerations, it is against the law for anyone to sell any meat containing unsafe levels of drugs. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) sets tolerance levels for some drugs based on safety data; some drugs used in food animals have no tolerance levels, and as a result, any meat containing those residues must be discarded.

How does meat residue testing work?

The USDA FSIS (Food Safety and Inspection Service) oversees antibiotic testing of meat tissue, which is broad and can detect most common drugs used on farms. Inspectors in slaughter plants collect samples from random animals. These samples are screened at the plant on the KIS test (Kidney Inhibition Swab). If a KIS test is positive, samples from the carcass will be sent to a USDA lab for further testing for many drugs, such as antibiotics, anti-parasitics, anti-inflammatories, and tranquilizers. If a residue is identified above the safe tolerance level, the owner of the carcass will be notified of a tissue (meat) residue violation.

What are the penalties for a drug residue in meat?

Producers that sell an animal with a detected meat residue will receive a warning letter from the FDA, as well as an on-farm visit to review records and collect information on the cause of a residue. The names of violators with two or more violations in a 12-month period are posted on a USDA repeat violators list, that is used as a reference for meat processors and livestock markets as they determine whether or not future animals from that producer are at higher risk of a residue. The FDA may also prohibit producers found to have been neglectful, or who fail to adequately prevent residues, from selling animals for meat.

Are there other consequences for a drug residue in meat?

In order to satisfy the requirements of their food safety plan, meat processing facilities may avoid purchasing animals from farmers with multiple published violations. Some processors may also place a violator on probation for a time after the FIRST violation. During this time, they might require the violator to attest that each animal shipped to the facility is free of medications and include supporting documentation from the violator and/or their veterinarian.

How can you decrease your chances of having a drug residue in your animals?

Livestock producers can implement several best practices to avoid residues:

- Keep accurate treatment records
- Consult with your veterinarian about appropriate use of veterinary drugs and accurate withdrawal time
- Adhere to injection site limitations for each individual drug
- Avoid selling animals for food that are very sick, lame or severely dehydrated; opt for humane euthanasia instead

Contribute to food safety by practicing on-farm drug residue prevention. If you would think twice before consuming the meat from your farm, then consider that no one should be eating that product.

For additional information visit **www.mda.state.mn.us/residue-prevention**

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, this information is available in alternative forms of communication upon request by calling 651-201-6000. TTY users can call the Minnesota Relay Service at 711. The MDA is an equal opportunity employer and provider.