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GAIN Report

Global Agricultural Information Network

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Korea - Republic of

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Korea Phases Out Antibiotic Usage in Compound Feed

Report Categories:

Livestock and Products

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Report Highlights:

On July 1, 2011, Korea completed a several yearlong process of phasing out the use of antibiotics in commercial compound feed production until a veterinary oversight system can be put in place. In the meantime, these drugs can still be mixed into feed rations on the farm, added to the water, or injected. This development has no impact on imports of U.S. red meat or poultry.

General Information:

In 2003, the Ministry of Agriculture, Food, Forestry & Fisheries (MIFAFF) announced plans to begin phasing-out the routine use of antibiotics in commercial compound feed until a veterinary oversight system can be put in place. The main reason behind this decision is to cut back on misuse and limit antibiotic resistance in humans.

The phase-out process began in earnest back in May 2005, when the number of antibiotics permitted in commercial compound feed was cut from 53 to 25. The number was reduced to 18 in January 2009. The remaining antibiotics were discontinued as of July 1, 2011. Of note, the following anticoccidial and anthelmintic drugs can still be added to commercial compound feed: salinomycin, sodium monensin, sodium lasalocid, naracin, maduramycin ammonium, semduramycin, cropidol, fenbendazole, and diclazuril.

The soonest the veterinary prescription system could be up and running is late 2012, which will open the door again to allow antibiotics in commercial compound feed. In the meantime, MIFAFF has taken steps to help ease the transition to the new system, including: delivering education/information to livestock growers and feed mills; developing alternative prophylactic compounds along with the relevant training manuals; promoting farm modernization and improved animal husbandry techniques to reduce disease; and promoting antibiotic-free and natural production practices.

At this point, there are several very important facts to note. First, antibiotics are still allowed to be added to feed mixed on farm or in the water and can also be injected. As was noted above, after the veterinary prescription system is up and running the local feed mills will again be able to add these compounds to feed rations under the direction of a veterinarian. Second, there is no anticipated impact on demand for compound feed, which is primarily made from U.S. grains. Third, Korea's veterinary drug residue limits remain in place since these compounds will continue to be used in the Korean livestock industry. Fourth, and most important, this measure does **not/not** apply to animals from which imported meat is derived. In other words, there is no impact on imports of U.S. red meat or poultry.