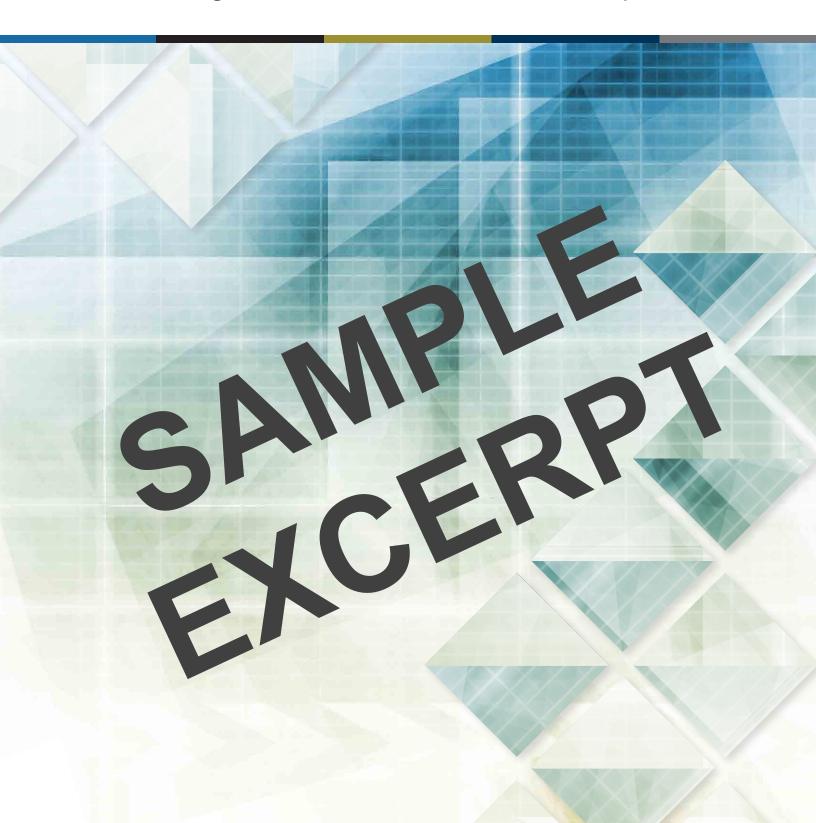


Antibiotic-Free Poultry Production:

Understanding Producer and Consumer Perspectives



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INTRODUCTION

Successful antibiotic-free poultry production requires understanding producer and consumer perspectives including marketing, regulations and science. This collection of exclusive and in-depth articles from the acclaimed editors of *WATT Poultry USA* and *Poultry International* magazines and many expert contributors, will provide you with highly valuable insights that intend to help you strengthen and grow your poultry business.

The production of poultry and livestock without antibiotics has gone from a niche market to the mainstream in a matter of years. Increased awareness about the dangers of antimicrobial resistance has increased consumer and government pressure for a prudent use of antibiotics, extending beyond human health care to focus on antibiotic administration in animal agriculture. It's been widely reported that antibiotic residues in meat are responsible for increased incidents of resistance; however, antibiotic contamination in carcasses is virtually non-existent.

A disconnect between livestock producers and consumers has created a lack of trust and a movement for a more transparent food supply chain. Consumers are looking for and buying poultry raised without antibiotics and many national and international fast-food chains and restaurants have announced they will only serve antibiotic-free meats, which is creating new challenges for poultry and livestock producers. Growing consumer and regulatory pressure raises the question of whether antibiotic use in livestock production could end in the coming years.

The challenges of raising healthy ABF flocks requires changes in production techniques and management strategies like biosecurity measures, which significantly impact poultry health and performance. Producers have raised concerns that removing all antibiotics can increase flock mortality rates from common poultry diseases like coccidiosis and necrotic enteritis.

In 2017, The U.S. Food and Drug Administration's Veterinary Feed Directive (VFD), which will ban the use of growth promoting antibiotics the FDA deems medically important to humans, will go into effect. Under the VFD, all antibiotics for livestock must be under direct veterinary supervision so they are only used when necessary for assuring animal health.

The World Organization for Animal Health also has developed a set of international standards for animal antibiotic use to help protect the effectiveness of antibiotics used in veterinary medicine. Europe is the first major market to restrict the use of antibiotics in meat and poultry production, which has increased production costs in the EU. U.S. poultry producers and the rest of the world are watching carefully and studying how to transition to relying less on antibiotics and using nutritional additives and alternative feed ingredients for healthy birds.

It is critical to stay on top of the most important issues impacting our industry today to remain competitive. The WATT Global Media Focus Series was created to help you achieve that objective, and ultimately succeed in reaching your business goals.