Drug Residue Avoidance
Swine

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Contaminated meat is a major concern for human health. Any adulterated product may result in drug residue allergies or other adverse effects in humans.

Producers found guilty for illegal drug residue may face the following:
- financial penalties,
- criminal penalties,
- refusal at sale barns and packing facilities, or
- negative public perception.

**INTRODUCTION**

The swine industry encompasses both live swine (hogs and pigs) and the production of pork.

Animal drugs are used in the swine industry for production (feed efficiency or growth promotion) and therapeutic (treat, control, or prevent disease) purposes to reduce mortality and morbidity.

There are two major concerns related to their use: drug residue and drug resistance.

The focus of this pamphlet will be on drug residue prevention which continues to be a challenge in the pork industry due to its complex nature.

**DRUG RESIDUE**

Drug residue refers to the presence of veterinary pharmaceutical products such as antimicrobials and deworming products in meat or milk.

These substances enter into an animal's body by the following routes: feed, water, injections, external treatments or by accident. The residue may remain in the tissue up to several months.

The risk of violative drug residues can be minimized if treatment protocols are carefully followed and approved drugs are used for the class of animal being treated.

**ILLEGAL DRUG RESIDUE**

An “illegal drug residue” is any drug found above the allowable range in an animal sent to slaughter.

**IMPORTANCE OF DRUG RESIDUE**

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**DRUG USE**

Sulfa drugs or sulfonamides are one of the most commonly used drugs in pig feeds.

Sulfa residues have been found in the livers of slaughtered swine. Extensive testing and research has demonstrated, sulfa residue is not normally due to illegal drug use or improper withdrawal time. It is the result of cross-contamination between medicated and non-medicated feeds.

Therefore, a high importance is placed on the flushing and cleaning methods of producers that mix their own feed.

**RESIDUE PREVENTION CHECKLIST**

- Establish a Veterinary-Client-Patient Relationship
- Adopt a Quality Assurance Program
- Supply fresh water
- Clean feeders
- Clean manure and bedding
- Clean equipment to prevent cross-contamination
- Practice proper injection site techniques
- Identify individually treated animals
- Keep good records
- Follow established withdrawal times
- Avoid Extra Label Drug Use
- Practice proper feed mixing practices
  - Read and follow label instructions
  - Use proper dosage
  - Avoid using feeders for both medicated and non-medicated feed whenever possible
- Do not mix hogs receiving sulfa with market animals
- Prevent delivery errors
  - Clearly mark medicated and non-medicated bins and feeders