

Unit 23: Safe use of veterinary medicines

Factsheet

Introduction

Veterinary medicines include antibiotics, vaccines, wormers (anthelmintics) and ectoparasiticides such as sheep dips.

Farmers are allowed to administer veterinary medicines as long as they are acting in accordance with the Veterinary medicines directorate.

Key points in the safe use of veterinary medicines

Good practice guidelines

- Create a health plan ahead to prevent diseases.
- The health plan **MUST** be workable and strictly adhered to
- Consult your veterinary surgeon when you require the diagnosis of any animal health problem
- Buy animal medicines from your veterinary surgeon, pharmacy, or registered agricultural merchant in the UK
- Use authorised animal medicines only
- Only buy enough of the appropriate medicine necessary for immediate use
- Keep proper records - it is a legal requirement
- Avoid unnecessary use of medicines
- Read instructions carefully, including the label, product leaflet and safety data sheet
- Do not use any medicine which is past its expiry date
- Always complete the treatment programme
- Strictly observe any withdrawal period stated on the label of the medicine
- Store the medicines in accordance with the instructions on the label
- Make sure that your medicines are stored securely and correctly.

Good injection practice

The following simple rules will help to reduce the risks of spreading infection when giving single or multiple injections:

- Disposable needles and syringes should be used where possible
- Ensure that all other equipment (needles, syringes, tubing etc.) are cleansed and sterilised* before and after use
- If you are using a syringe which requires to be filled from the bottle between doses, use one sterile needle left in the bottle during use to fill the syringe and a separate needle to inject the animal
- Use a sterile needle for the injection, preferably using a fresh needle for each animal
- Make sure you know how to administer the injection
- Ensure you have the correct dosage rate
- Make the injection through an area of clean, dry skin.
- Do not inject through wet or dirty skin
- Partially used bottles of vaccines should be destroyed safely and not used again
- If you inject yourself, then seek immediate medical advice.

Lastly

THE GOLDEN RULE

READ THE MEDICINE LABEL – each one is different!