



CLFMA calls for responsible use of antibiotics in animal protein sector

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MUMBAI: As the World Antibiotic Awareness Week (13 – 19 Nov 2017) is celebrated, the Compound Feed Manufacturers Association of India (CLFMA) calls for promoting awareness among all stakeholders in the animal protein sector about judicious and responsible use of antibiotics.

India's animal protein sector is one of the major contributors to the nation's overall economic growth and most importantly in alleviating poverty and malnutrition. Serving as the foundation of rural India's prosperity, it provides employment to a few hundred million farmers mainly smallholders and protects their livelihoods, CLFMA said in a statement

India's livestock industry is on a strong upward trajectory posting strong growth in the last few decades and is recognized as one of the most promising globally. Looking ahead, next five to ten years are extremely critical for the sector to maintain its growth and strengthen its competitiveness.

Antibiotics are used in animal agribusiness for many decades and are essential for maintaining the health, hygiene and welfare of the animals both in the industrialized and backyard scenarios. Recently, we are witnessing increasing concerns on the use of antibiotics in livestock farming globally.

As WHO describes, antibiotics are precious tools for the veterinarians for prevention, control and treatment of diseases in animals and also for promoting growth. When used responsibly and judiciously, Antibiotics contribute enormously to produce sufficient quantities of safe, quality, nutritious and affordable food.

While genuine concerns about misuse, overuse and subsequently, resistance issues are understandable, several myths, opinions, and unfounded claims undermine the critical role of antibiotics in the broader context of global food and nutrition security.

In today's world that is seamlessly connected through social media and other communication channels, it is indeed much easier to evoke negative publicity on anything. Further, regulatory and policy decisions nowadays, are increasingly getting influenced by public perception. Hence, besides busting myths, sharing correct information about the benefits of using antibiotics promoting awareness are the needs of the hour in India and globally.

As the apex association representing India's animal agribusiness sector, CLFMA acknowledges this is not just an issue of usage of antibiotics per se but one that has much larger implications in terms of animal productivity; costs of food production; incomes; profits; and ultimately livelihoods of the farming community.

CLFMA is actively encouraging and advising its members to focus on cascading correct knowledge and information about proper use of antibiotics. In the long-term perspective, CLFMA reiterates that it is critical to promote awareness among farmers, veterinarians and other industry stakeholders besides effectively regulating the availability and quality of antibiotic products available in the marketplace using existing rules and regulations.

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