

REPORTING EXTRA-LABEL ANTIBIOTIC USE AND CALIBRATING MEDICATORS

Antibiotics play an important role in ensuring the animal health and welfare of Canadian chicken flocks.

In some cases, antibiotics will be prescribed by a veterinarian to be used in an “extra-label” manner. Extra-label antibiotic use is when an antibiotic is used in any manner that is not consistent with what is indicated on the label, package, or information insert as approved by Health Canada.

Antibiotic use is considered extra-label if:

- The route of administration differs from the label (e.g. feed vs water);
- The antibiotic is designed for another species (e.g. TMS Oral Granules is only approved for horses);
- The dosage or duration of use differs from the label instructions; or,
- The antibiotic is given in combination with another antibiotic where that combination is not approved (e.g. mix of Salinomycin, Bacitracin and Nicarbazine in feed)

HOW TO DETERMINE IF AN ANTIBIOTIC IS USED EXTRA-LABEL

Farmers can identify if there are extra-label antibiotics in their feed ration by reviewing the feed slips from the feed mill, or the vet prescription. For poultry, all extra-label use requires the prescribing veterinarian to use a CgFARAD

(Canadian Global Food Animal Residue Avoidance Databank) reference number.

WHAT NEEDS TO BE REPORTED?

Any time an antibiotic is used in an extra-label manner, the use must be recorded on the Flock Information Reporting Form under question number 6, along with the accompanying information about the antibiotic used.

The information in the Flock Information Reporting Form is required by federal regulations and is enforced by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency. During audits of the On-Farm Food Safety Program (OFFSP), auditors will cross-reference the feed slips and veterinary prescriptions with the Flock Information Reporting Form.

MONITOR FEED TAGS AND PRESCRIPTIONS CLOSELY

During all flocks, farmers are to be reviewing feed tags and prescriptions to assess for extra-label use and associated withdrawal times.

When reviewing feed tags, check each ration for changes in the types and/or combinations of antibiotics used, the concentration of antibiotics used, and any CgFARAD reference numbers. These documents will also provide valuable information about any withdrawal times associated with the antibiotics.

IF ANTIBIOTICS WERE
USED IN AN EXTRA-LABEL
MANNER, THERE WILL BE
A CgFARAD NUMBER.
CgFARAD NUMBERS BEGIN
WITH EITHER ON OR SK
AND ARE FOLLOWED BY A
SERIES OF 11 NUMBERS
(EX. ON – 456901 – 11350).

When antibiotics with a withdrawal time are used during the last 2 weeks of the grow-out, additional measures are needed to ensure there is no carry-over or residues of feed and that the withdrawal times are respected. To accomplish this, the feed in the feed lines must be minimized. This can be achieved by knocking down the feed bin with a rubber mallet and emptying the bins and hopper in the barn prior to the subsequent feed ration being used.

CALIBRATING MEDICATORS

Calibrating medicators is an important step to ensure that any antibiotics delivered through water are given at the correct dosage and concentration. The *Raised by a Canadian Farmer* OFFSP requires that medicators be tested each time before an antibiotic is administered. Even in cases where antibiotics have not been used through the water in many months or even years, it is important for farmers to know how to perform the calibration in the case of an emergency where birds become sick and require treatment through the water.

Farmers are required to be able to explain the process of calibrating the medicator during the OFFSP audit.

For more information on this method, check out [this video](#) narrated by Dr. Martine Boulianne – Professor and Poultry Research Chair in the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine at the University of Montreal – on the process of calibrating medicators.



THE FOLLOWING STEPS DESCRIBE ONE METHOD FOR CALIBRATION, BUT OTHER PROTOCOLS MAY BE PROVIDED IN MANUFACTURER RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1) Disconnect the outflow side of the medicator from the water line.
- 2) Fill a measuring cup with a specific amount of water.
- 3) Place a pail under the outflow of the medicator.
- 4) Place the medicator intake tube in the measuring cup.
- 5) Turn on the water supply through the medicator.
 - If the correct amount disappears out of the measuring cup, then the medicator is working properly. If not, your medicator needs servicing. As an example, for medicators set at 1%, when 10 L has collected in the pail at the outflow end, there should be 100 ml gone from the measuring cup.