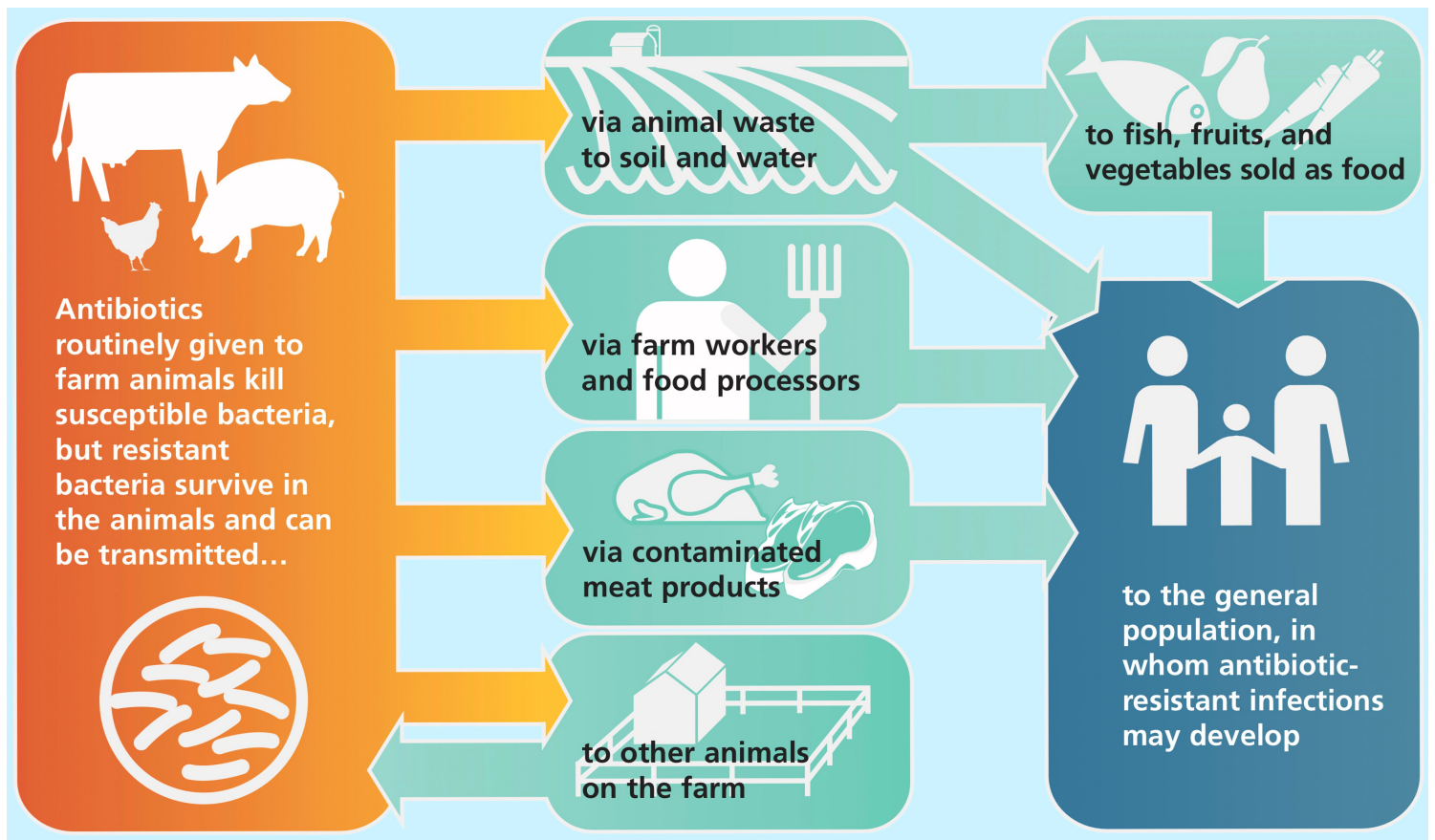


# Keep Antibiotics Working Celebrates 20 Years of Advocacy



# Introduction to KAW

Keep Antibiotics Working (KAW) is a national coalition of twenty public health, environmental, consumer, animal protection and other advocacy organizations that joined together to ensure that untreatable superbugs resulting from the overuse of antibiotics on farms do not reverse the medical advances of the past century. **Since its formation in 2001, KAW has continued to urge governmental and corporate action to eliminate the overuse of antibiotics on farms.**

KAW promotes integrated surveillance of both antibiotic use and antibiotic-resistant superbugs in the food chain and works to limit the spread of antibiotic resistance in the United States and throughout the world.

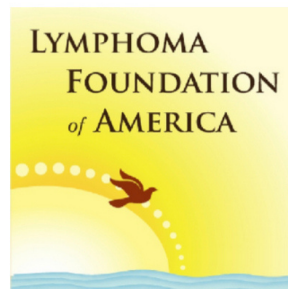
This year we celebrate 20 years of advocacy and applaud the many individuals who have contributed to the success of the coalition and we recognize the fight that's still ahead.



Photo Courtesy of Mark Bearce

# Member Organizations

Spanning the nation, KAW coalition members work on an array of issues, but have partnered specifically to address the urgent public health crisis of antibiotic resistance. **Together we have been able to enact policy changes that have led to significant drops in antibiotic use in animal agriculture despite resistance from the animal livestock industry and animal drug makers.** However, there is more work to be done and without further action, the progress we have made over the last twenty years will be lost.

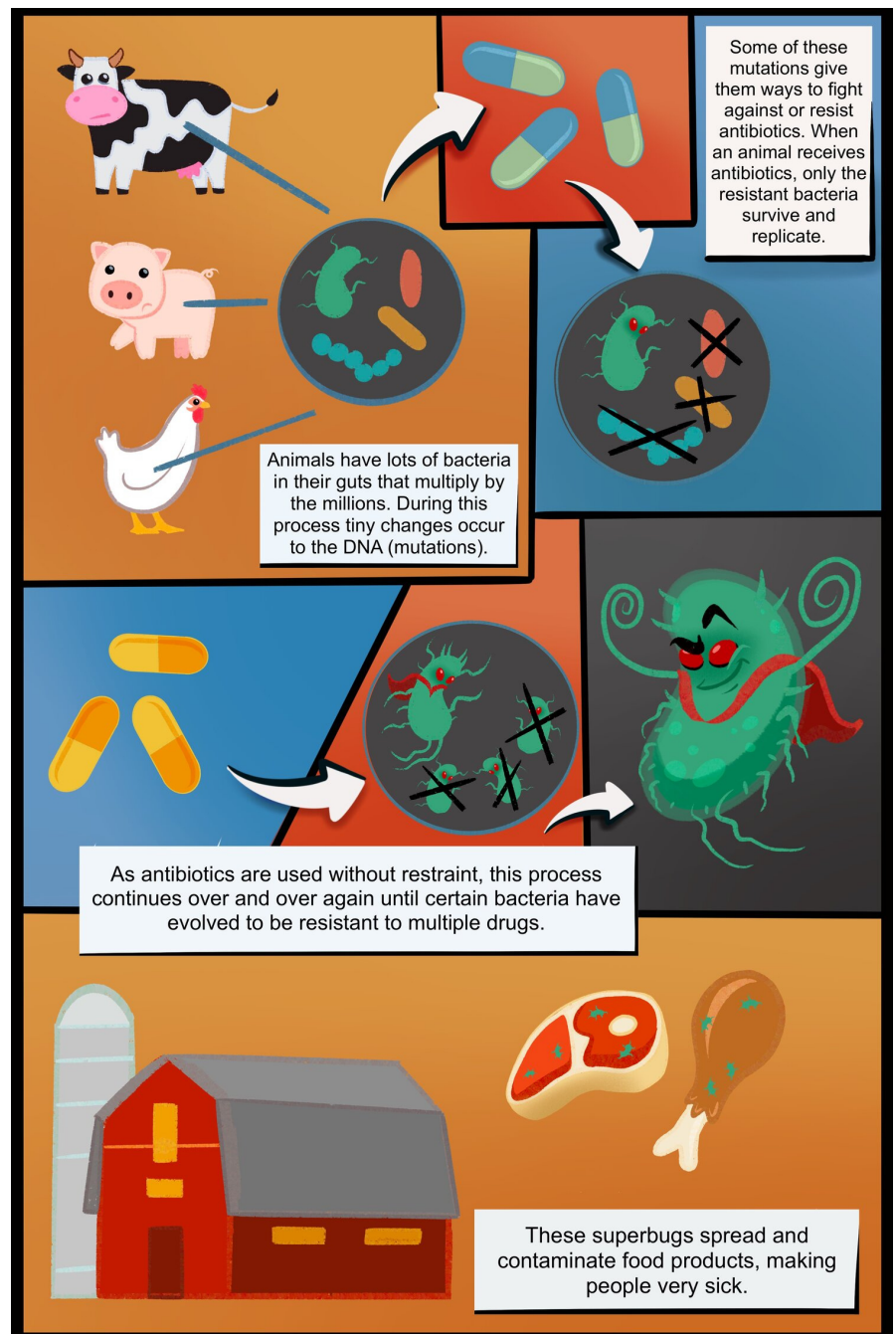


# What is the Issue?

Antibiotic resistant organisms are spreading rapidly throughout the world and are killing upwards of **750,000 people a year**.<sup>1</sup> This is a problem of enormous proportion. Though slower moving than many recognized health crises, antibiotic resistance has the potential to erode our entire health system within the next several years. From basic healthcare to life saving procedures, antibiotics have become indispensable in human medicine. Unfortunately, the overuse of antibiotics in both agriculture and human medicine has led to a dramatic increase in the number of antibiotic resistant organisms throughout the world, and has rendered many of these treatments useless.<sup>2</sup>

Many more antibiotics are used on farms than in doctors' offices and hospitals, therefore, **stopping the increase in resistant organisms requires stopping antibiotic overuse on farms**.<sup>3</sup> Overuse occurs when farms give antibiotics to animals that are not sick or when farms fail to implement practices that keep animals healthy. Much of the antibiotic use on farms is to prevent diseases that are expected

to occur due to inappropriate diets and unhealthy living conditions. This overuse contributes to the development of antibiotic-resistant superbugs in animals, which can spread to humans.



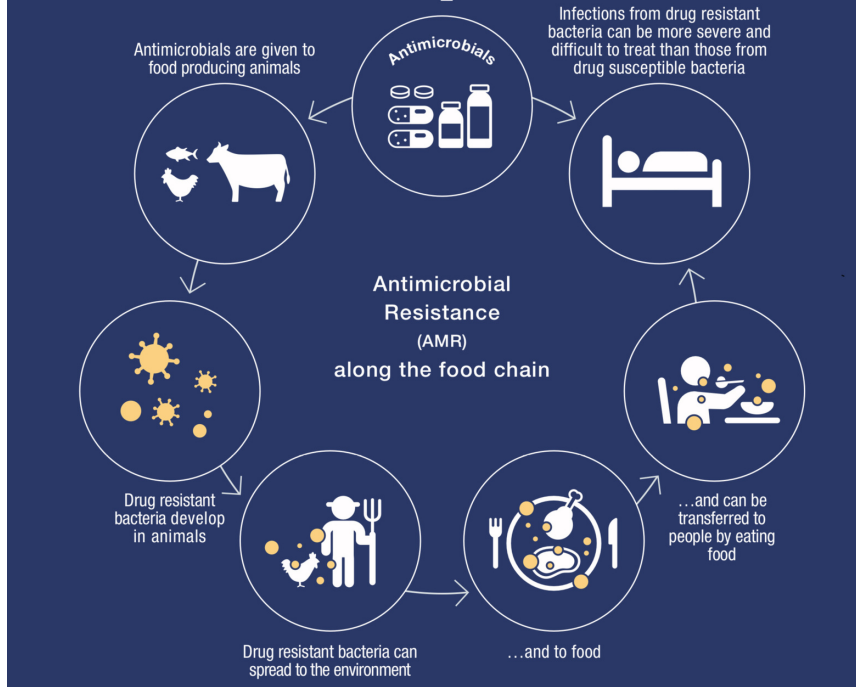
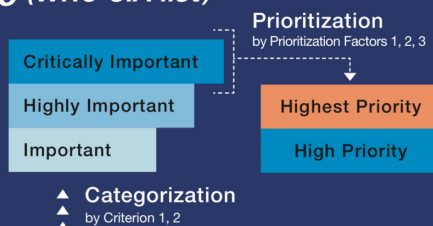
# A Focus on Medically Important Antibiotics

Antibiotics are divided into classes based on the method they use to stop bacteria from growing. Because of this, bacteria become resistant to specific drugs. As more and more antibiotics are used in animals and humans, bacteria become resistant to multiple antibiotic classes, creating infections that are resistant to many, if not all, available antibiotics.<sup>4</sup>

**KAW focuses on medically important antibiotics - antibiotics that are in classes used in both animal agriculture and human medicine.** We do this because resistance that develops on farms to medically important antibiotics not only makes it more difficult to treat infections in animals but humans as well.

## WHO list of Critically Important Antimicrobials for Human Medicine (WHO CIA list)

WHO CIA list categorizes all antimicrobials used in human medicine into 3 groups based on their importance to human medicine. The current scope is limited to antibacterial drugs of which most are also used in veterinary medicine. The list assists in managing antimicrobial resistance, ensuring that all, especially critically important antimicrobials, are used prudently both in human and veterinary medicine.



Courtesy of The World Health Organization

**KAW's main goal is to get farms to raise animals in ways that prevent illness and reduce the need for antibiotics.** This ensures that antibiotics are available for disease treatment and reduces the risk of resistant superbug infections in humans.

The coalition constantly urges federal and industry action to preserve all of our antibiotics, and especially those that are medically important. However, the industry remains recalcitrant and FDA often seems disinclined to take action, so it is up to us and our supporters to keep fighting and urging change in policy and industry standards.

# Our Principles

## All of KAW's coalition members believe in the same set of guiding principles:

- We support eliminating the misuse of antibiotics in both agriculture and human medicine in order to stop the spread of antibiotic-resistant superbugs that cause difficult to treat infections in humans and animals.
- We support a ban on the use of medically important antibiotics in food animals for purposes other than treating individual sick or injured animals or controlling outbreaks of diagnosed bacterial infections in groups of animals where disease is likely to spread. An antibiotic is medically important if it is used in human medicine or is closely related to a human drug.
- We promote producing food in ways that do not rely upon routine or regular use of antibiotics. Animal disease should be prevented by raising animals under healthy conditions, administering vaccines, implementing good husbandry practices, and providing appropriate diets; not by administering antibiotics.
- We urge companies involved in the production and marketing of meat, milk, eggs, poultry and fish (livestock producers, supermarkets, restaurants, etc.) to set time bound policies that eliminate the use of medically important antibiotics for purposes other than treating sick or injured animals or controlling diagnosed outbreaks of bacterial infections.
- We support the creation of a nationwide system to collect objective, representative, verifiable data on the production, sales, and use of antibiotics in both human medicine and animal agriculture, and to make that information available to the public.
- We support the collection and reporting at the state and federal level of data on antibiotic resistant bacteria collected from farms, food animals, food, sick people, and the environment.

# KAW's Work Through the Years

## Where We Started      Where We Are      Where We Need To Go

Antibiotics not ranked by medical importance

Antibiotics are ranked by medical importance but the ranking has never been reviewed

Ranking of antibiotics is reviewed regularly - Use of highest ranked antibiotics is curtailed

Antibiotics widely used to make animals grow faster on less feed

Feeding medically important antibiotics (MIAs) for growth is banned

MIAs no longer used for disease prevention - Animals are raised with high welfare standards

Most antibiotics can be purchased without prescription

Veterinarian's orders are needed to use MIAs in feed or water; some injectable MIAs are still over the counter

Veterinarian orders needed for all antibiotics

No requirement to consider antibiotic resistance (ABR) when approving most animal antibiotics

New animal drug approvals must consider ABR as part of safety review but older drugs grandfathered in

Older antibiotics are required to meet current safety standards with respect to resistance

No federal collection and reporting of data on amounts of antibiotics used or sold

FDA collects and publicly reports farm antibiotic use data along with resistance data

FDA collects farm antibiotic use data in an integrated report with antibiotic resistance data

Resistance to newer antibiotics is very rare but resistance to older antibiotics is high

Resistance to newer drugs on the rise along with some drops in resistance to older drugs

Resistance to all antibiotics in food animals is reduced to low levels

Consolidation well under way in all animal agriculture sectors

Farm size continues to increase especially in pigs and dairy cattle

Consolidation is halted and smaller farms with improved animal health become more common

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