

Statement from a spokesperson for the Department of Agriculture:

- The department notes that a small-scale survey, conducted by Monash University, of beef and salmon purchased from three Australian supermarkets identified the presence of antibiotic resistant bacteria.
- More than half of the antimicrobials tested in the Monash University study are reserved for treatment of human infections.
- The Report findings are not reflective of current antimicrobial usage practices in Australia's beef industry.
- The Report findings are also not reflective of current antimicrobial usage practices in Australia's salmon industry.
 - The report outlined that potentially acquired resistance was observed in a wide range of antimicrobials in salmon isolates. Other than tetracyclines, the other antimicrobial classes tested in this study (aminoglycosides, beta-lactams and macrolides) are not used by Australia's salmon industry.
 - Antimicrobials are used only as required under strict veterinary supervision to treat affected fish diagnosed with a bacterial disease.
 - Antimicrobials are not used for prophylaxis (disease prevention purposes), nor are they used to promote weight gain and improve yields in farmed salmon
- Based on the above, it is likely that the isolates obtained in the study are not of animal origin.

Australia's approach to AMR

- Australia has a good record of low antimicrobial resistance (AMR) risk in animals.
 - Australia has adopted one of the most conservative approaches to the use of antimicrobials in agriculture in the world – with an independent UK review released in December 2015, listing Australia among the lowest users of antibiotics in agriculture.
 - Australia is also a signatory to the international Call to Action on AMR. This document was agreed by 108 member countries. Australia also has international representation on the World Health Organization's One Health Global Leaders Group on AMR, which aims to promote urgent action to combat the threat of AMR worldwide.
- Registration process for antibiotics and antimicrobials for use on food producing animals in Australia takes a science and risk-based approach.
 - From 1970 onwards, AMR risks have been considered when introducing new classes of antimicrobials for food producing animals.
 - As a result of Australia's considerations of AMR risks, fluoroquinolones have never been approved for use in food-producing animals in Australia, even though these are permitted in other countries, including within the European Union.
- Australia has a national antimicrobial resistance strategy that reflects the shared responsibility of human health, agriculture and environment and the best available scientific knowledge of this topic.
 - The latest strategy (Australia's National AMR Strategy: 2020 & Beyond) reflects a stronger One Health focus, and extends the types of antimicrobials considered from predominantly antibiotics, to antifungals, antiprotozoals, and antivirals.
- Australia has established importance ratings for antimicrobials, which are readily available on the joint Government AMR website.
- The Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) responsible for registration of antimicrobials requires a detailed assessment of the risk of AMR for all new antimicrobials and any variations to existing label claims before being approved for use in Australia.

- Currently registered antimicrobials that are medically important for human health are not approved for use in Australia for growth promotion purposes.
- It is essential that we retain access to antimicrobials for treatment, control and prevention of infection or disease to support the health and welfare of both humans and animals.

The National Residue Survey (NRS);

- The NRS is an essential part of Australia's pesticide and veterinary medicine residue management framework providing verification of good agricultural practice in support of chemical control-of-use legislation and guidelines.. The NRS annually collects data on pesticide and veterinary medicine residues (including antibiotics) and environment contaminant concentrations in products. This is available on the department's website: [National Residue Survey - DAWE](#)
- The NRS does not collect or hold data on antimicrobial usage or antimicrobial resistance.

Information about the management of AMR in food producing animals is available at the following link: [AMR and animal health in Australia | Antimicrobial resistance](#)

With regards to allegations that there is not enough ***surveillance or transparency around the monitoring of antibiotic use and antimicrobial resistance*** in agricultural industries such as the beef feedlot sector:

- The department receives data on annual returns from importers, manufacturers and exporters of products from the APVMA. The data supports Australia's annual international reporting obligation to the OIE on Antimicrobial Agents Intended for Use in Animals. This report is publicly available.
- Australia is also in the initial planning stage for a nationally coordinated One Health Surveillance System that will collect and report on antimicrobial resistance (AMR) and antimicrobial use across the different One Health sectors: human health, animal health, agriculture, food and the environment.
- Further, in 2018, antimicrobial stewardship guidelines for the Australian cattle feedlot industry were published, to provide a continuous improvement framework to help lot feeders understand and ensure appropriate use of antimicrobials and therefore reduce the risk of AMR.