

# US: Antibiotic-resistance data distorted

**Just days after the release of a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) report showing that medical doctors annually are prescribing enough antibiotics to give them to 80 percent of Americans, a group is set to issue its own report, claiming that antibiotics use in food animals is the main cause for people developing antibiotic-resistant diseases.**



The Environmental Working Group (EWG) is using selective and incomplete 2011 government data on retail meat samples to blame America's livestock and poultry farmers for the growing problem of antibiotic-resistant illnesses in people.

In fact, 2000 to 2010 data from the federal National Antimicrobial Resistance Monitoring System show a very low incidence of pathogenic bacteria on meat and stable to declining rates of those bacteria that are resistant to antibiotics.

The EWG report was set to be released on 15 April ahead of congressional action on reauthorizing the Animal Drug User Fee Act (ADUFA). Many groups who support legislation to ban the use in food animals of antibiotics that prevent or control diseases and of ones that improve nutritional efficiency are weighing in on ADUFA, urging Congress to limit the animal health products available to livestock producers.

But, points out the National Pork Producers Council, numerous peer-reviewed risk assessments, including at least one from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, have shown a "negligible" risk to human health of antibiotics use in livestock and poultry production.

"Pork producers use antibiotics in targeted ways, under a veterinarian's supervision, to protect public health and the health of their animals and to produce safe food," said NPPC President Randy Spronk, a pork producer from Edgerton, Minn. "The data don't show what groups opposed to modern food-animal production claim; they continue to distort information to fit their agenda to end modern agriculture."

NPPC wants an ADUFA reauthorization bill that's free of amendments. The law allows

FDA to collect fees from animal health companies for the timely review and approval of products.

“Taking care of our animals to produce safe food starts with Congress passing ADUFA and not letting it die because of controversial amendments,” Spronk said.

Source: **National Pork Producers Council (NPPC)**

*by Pig Progress Apr 18, 2013*