



RanchingTruth.com

About Us

We at Ranching Truth are a collection of ranchers, cowboys and agriculture professionals who have turned our passions into livelihoods to earn a living for our families and feed the world.

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Myth: 80 Percent of Antibiotics are Used in Animals

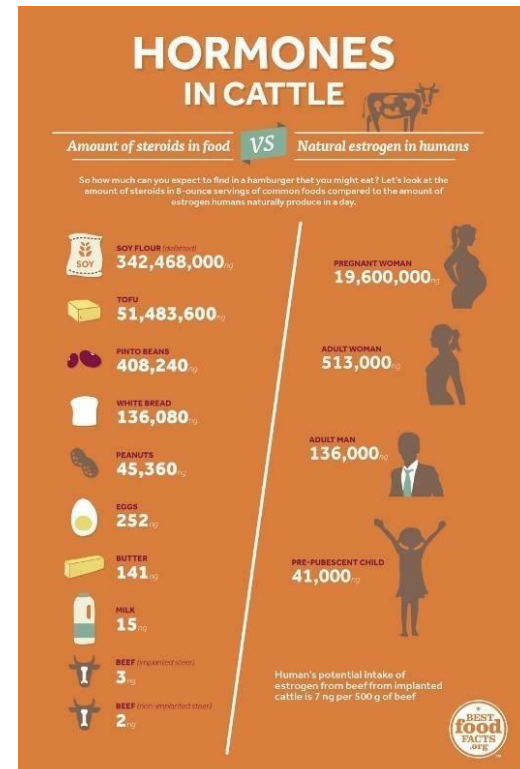
Fact:

The 80 percent number that is commonly used by critics of antibiotic use in livestock and poultry is extrapolated from Food and Drug Administration data on how much antibiotics are sold in the U.S. every year for human and animal use. Because there is currently no solid data on antibiotic use in human medicine so this calculation is a guess at best. The FDA has specifically said that the numbers shouldn't be compared, but many continue to use it anyway.

The United States government mandates that no beef with antibiotic residues that exceed FDA standards be allowed in the food supply; therefore, all beef sold in the United States is safe from antibiotics.



Antibiotics and Hormones
in Beef



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Antibiotic Stewardship is Not New to Cattle Ranchers

There has been a great deal of discussion lately about how antibiotics are used in raising livestock. The reality is that farmers and ranchers take antibiotic use in livestock very seriously and continuously evaluate the way they use antibiotics based on the best possible science.

In fact, for nearly 30 years, there have been quality assurance programs in place to help make sure farmers and ranchers are continuously improving the way they raise beef, including the way they use antibiotics, in order to protect human health, as well as animal health. This is often referred to as "antibiotic stewardship."

USDA Regulations

A common myth surrounding beef produced with additional hormones is that it is unsafe to consume. The fact is that the U.S. Food and Drug Administration regulates the development and use of hormone implants and the Food Safety Inspection Service of the USDA routinely monitors residues of synthetic hormones in meat. It is true that beef from hormone-implanted cattle has increased estrogenic activity compared with non-implanted beef. This fact alone may alarm beef consumers but it must be put into the context of actual amount consumed and the levels found in other products. As shown in Table 1., beef from a non-implanted steer contains .85 units of estrogenic activity per 3 oz. serving, while beef from an implanted steer contains 1.2 units of estrogenic activity in the same serving. However, this amount is a fraction of what is found in many other common foods. For example, the same quantity of eggs would provide 94 units of estrogenic activity and a 3 oz. serving of tofu would provide 19,306,004 units of estrogenic activity. In fact, a normal adult male produces 136,000 ng of estrogen per day while a non-pregnant woman produces 513,000 ng/day on average, making consumption of the levels of estrogen in implanted beef relatively inconsequential.

"I have always stuck up for Western medicine. You can chew all the celery you want, but without antibiotics, three quarters of us would not be here." Hugh Laurie



Myth: Big beef uses antibiotics without regard for animal welfare or human health.

Facts: Antibiotics are just one tool beef farmers and ranchers use to keep cattle healthy by treating and preventing the spread of illness. Cattle can pick up illnesses, just like humans, whether they're out on pasture or in a feedlot with other animals. Cattlemen work closely with veterinarians to develop a comprehensive health program, which may include nutritious diet, proper housing, hygiene, vaccinations and antibiotics.

How are they used?

When an animal gets sick, farmers, ranchers and veterinarians carefully evaluate when to administer antibiotics and use specific dosages and treatment protocols to treat the animal.

Cattle farmers and ranchers believe not treating cattle that become sick is inhumane as part of their ongoing commitment to animal health and welfare. When administering antibiotics, they follow precise label directions, meaning they adhere to usage guidelines to protect both animals and humans that have been rigorously tested and approved by the United States Food & Drug Administration. Just like in human medicine, there are many protocols developed by veterinarians and scientists that they have to follow diligently.

Antibiotics are used in animal medicine to prevent disease, which is important to animal and human safety.