

Maryland Bans Routine Antibiotic Use in Food-Producing Animals

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- For years, **FDA**, **USDA**, and various industry stakeholders have sought to tackle public health concerns associated with the use of medically important antibiotics to promote growth or feed efficiency in food-producing animals. In the U.S., FDA is working with industry to gradually phase out the use of medically important antimicrobials in food animals for production purposes. Recently, states have also jumped into the fray, with California, for example, [adopting strict limits in 2015](#) on the use of antibiotics in healthy livestock, effectively barring their routine use to prevent illness or promote growth.
- On May 31, 2017, Maryland (MD) became the second state (after California) to ban the routine use of antibiotics on farms. The [bill](#), entitled “The Keep Antibiotics Effective Act” prohibits the administration of antimicrobial drugs to cattle, swine and poultry that are not sick, a practice many public health experts contend can fuel the spread of drug-resistant bacteria. The new law, which is slated to take effect on January 1, 2018, also requires the MD Department of Agriculture to collect publicly available data on use of certain antimicrobial drugs in the state.
- It remains to be seen whether and to what extent other states will seek to implement similar laws eliminating routine antibiotic use in food-producing animals

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National Law Review, Volume VII, Number 156

Source URL: <https://natlawreview.com/article/maryland-bans-routine-antibiotic-use-food-producing-animals>