

Lidl GB

Antibiotic Stewardship

Policy

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Our Position

In 2014 the UK government commissioned research into antimicrobial resistance (AMR), curating recommendations in the form of the 2016 O'Neill [report](#), The Review of Antimicrobial Resistance. Suggestions were made to the agriculture sector to help enable the reduction of inappropriate and unnecessary antibiotic use, to ensure that by medicating the livestock in food supply chains, the industry is not generating a natural resistance to human antibiotic treatments.

Since this report, the management of antibiotic use in livestock has become critically important. Crucially, where antibiotics are still used, the animals undergo a 'withdrawal period' during and after their treatment. This means that their product cannot be used for human consumption until after this specified withdrawal period when tests are completed to ensure high levels of product safety.

Lidl is part of the Food Industry Initiative on Antimicrobials (FIIA)⁽ⁱ⁾ and shares its vision to: "bring together retailers, manufacturers, processors and foodservice companies to promote and support responsible antibiotic use in livestock farming and aquaculture – taking collective action on antimicrobial resistance (AMR)".

Lidl subscribes to and fully supports the three FIIA policies covering: Responsible Use of Antibiotics, Measurement of Antibiotic Data, and a Code of Conduct on Access to and Use of Industry Data. More information on the FIIA and its policy positions can be found [here](#).

British farming has been making significant progress in its mission to reduce antibiotic use in its practices. Since 2014 there has been an overall reduction of antibiotic use of 50% ⁽ⁱⁱ⁾. This figure makes the UK one of the lowest using countries of antibiotics in Europe with such a commercially productive farming sector. Sales of Highest Priority Critically Important Antibiotics (HP-CIAs) have fallen by 75% within our British supply chains. Within poultry alone there has been a 97.3% ⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾ reduction in HP-CIAs since 2012. Since 2015 the British pork industry has seen total antibiotic use reduce by 62% ^(iv). There is still work to be done, but the British farming industry has worked collaboratively and risen to this challenge.

Our approach to antibiotic stewardship

Lidl International's overarching position

Lidl's suppliers are prohibited from using antibiotics as a preventive measure. Suppliers are obliged to restrict the use of antibiotics whilst ensuring individual sick animals are treated accordingly. Suppliers are required to develop action plans to reduce the use of antibiotics with the aim of reducing multi-resistant germs. In addition to this, Lidl's suppliers are prohibited from using growth hormones.

As founding members of the "[Initiative Tierwohl](#)"^(v) we are working collaboratively with the livestock and retail sectors across Europe to strengthen animal welfare standards and promote responsible antibiotic use.

Lidl Great Britain

Antibiotics are used to safeguard the health and wellbeing of the livestock within our supply chains. By working closely with our industry partners, suppliers and certification schemes, we encourage the considered use and continuous reduction of antibiotics by:

- Endorsing the Responsible Use of Medicines in Agriculture Alliance (RUMA)^(vi) and aligning with their antibiotic reduction targets (see table 1), which have been set across the animal agricultural sectors for 2020 to 2024.
- Supporting the RUMA recommended principle to use antibiotics on a basis of 'as little as possible and as much as necessary'.
- Restricting the use of the highest priority "critically important" antibiotics for human health (as defined by RUMA and the European Medicines Agency (EMA))^(vii).

⁽ⁱ⁾ FIIA – Home FIIA – FIIA

⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ RUMA – Home – [Responsible Use of Medicines in Agriculture Alliance](#)

⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾ BPC BPC Antibiotics Report 2020 – The British Poultry Council

^(iv) AHDB Antibiotic use in pigs falls for 5th year in a row | AHDB

^(v) [The Initiative Tierwohl](#): For more Animal Welfare in livestock farming

^(vi) RUMA – Home – [Responsible Use of Medicines in Agriculture Alliance](#)

^(vii) EMA – Veterinary Medicines | [European Medicines Agency](#)

- Supporting the research and recommendations made by the EMA on the prudent use of antibiotics in animals, to help combat the threat of bacteria resistance.
- Prohibiting the routine and prophylactic use of antibiotics in our supply chain.
- Using preventative treatment only under exceptional circumstances and only when directed by a veterinary surgeon.
- Recommending selective treatment, where individual animals are administered medicines only after a disease has been diagnosed.
- Working with expert partners and academic institutions, such as Glasgow University, to continue to listen and understand the impact of responsible antibiotic use within our supply chains and evolve our strategy accordingly.
- Working closely with assurance standards and industry bodies to continually improve standards, data collection and alignment of responsible antibiotic use within food supply chains.
- Continuing to expand reporting of our own supply chain's antibiotic use against the RUMA targets, across wider categories and species.

Our Scope

The scope of this policy covers all own-label products sold by Lidl GB. Particular focus is placed upon products purchased directly by our buying teams, based in Great Britain, including chicken, turkey, pork, beef, lamb, eggs, liquid milk, cheese and salmon (primary proteins and ingredients). This represents over 80% of the animal protein sold through our stores by volume per year. Imported products are managed by the respective Lidl country in line with Lidl International's commitment to *responsible antibiotic use*.

This policy works in conjunction with the overarching *Lidl Animal Health and Welfare Policy*.

This policy is owned by the Responsible Sourcing Department, Lidl GB, and must be implemented by Lidl's supply base as part of the commercial business relationship. Lidl GB reserves the right to audit compliance against this policy at any time and any queries on this policy should be directed to CSR_buying@lidl.co.uk. Lidl GB welcomes feedback on the positions outlined. This policy will continue to evolve in future iterations to expand in scope and expectations.

Our Actions

Antibiotic reduction in livestock supply chains

We encourage our producers to optimise the welfare, health, hygiene, husbandry and biosecurity of animals in order to reduce the need for antibiotic treatment. Therefore, antibiotics must not be used as a replacement for good farm management.

All antibiotics are a prescription-only medicine. Where they are necessary, they must be administered with the recommendation and advice of a partnered veterinary surgeon, following the correct treatment and storage protocol.

We do not permit the routine prophylactic use of antibiotics. Prophylactic use should only be considered under exceptional circumstances, where directed by a veterinary surgeon. Selective treatment is recommended, where individual animals are administered medicines only when a disease has first been diagnosed.

As part of our Animal Health and Welfare Policy, we require our suppliers and their producer sites to benchmark their progress against the 2020 reduction targets set by the RUMA Targets Taskforce.

Our targets

The targets table below refers to national targets set by The RUMA Targets Taskforce, which we fully endorse and adopt as part of our policy. More information can be found [here](#).

Sector	2020 Antibiotic Reduction Targets	Supplier Performance (2017 data)	2020 Results (RUMA)	2021 – 2024 New Antibiotic Reduction Targets
Dairy	<21 mg/PCU	17mg/kg	Data currently unavailable	15% mg/kg fall in dairy herds by 2024; baseline 2020/21 25% mg/kg fall in calf rearing units by 2024; baseline 2020/21
Beef	<10mg/kg	Overall use 19mg/kg	Data currently unavailable	Reduction in cattle injectables by 2024; baseline 0.26 mg/kg
Chicken	<25 mg/kg	9.85mg/kg	Achieved (2017-2019 usage data)	Use remains < 25mg/kg PCU in broiler production
Laying Hens	Maintain <1% birds medicated /day and <0.05% HP- CIA days medicated	Total birds/days treated remain below 1%	Achieved (2017-2019 usage data)	Maintain <1% birds medicated /day and <0.05% HP-CIA days medicated
Turkey	<50mg/kg	45.18mg/kg	Achieved (2017-2019 usage data)	Use remains < 50mg/kg PCU in broiler production
Pigs	99 mg/kg	Overall use 131mg/kg	105 mg/kg No colistin use has been reported in 2020. (AHDB – e-Med hub)	30% reduction in total use by 2024, baseline 2020
Sheep	Reduce overall use by 10%	Data collection efforts ongoing	Data currently unavailable	Annual reduction of 10% in oral doses/year; baseline 7.45 million Ensure HP-CIA's does not rise in sheep above 0.05% of total sheep use
Salmon	<5 mg/kg	Data collection efforts ongoing	Data currently unavailable	Maximum 5 mg/kg annually
Trout	<20 mg/kg	Data collection efforts ongoing	Achieved (2017-2019 usage data)	Maintain usage below 20 mg/kg

Farmed Seafood

All Lidl GB own-label listed seafood is sourced from farms that are certified to one of the following globally recognised, independently audited aquaculture practice standards: GLOBALG.A.P., Global Aquaculture Alliance (BAP) or Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC). These certifications assess environmental impacts, animal welfare and husbandry, water quality, feeding, transport and slaughter.

We are committed to sourcing all of our Deluxe Scottish salmon from RSPCA Assured fisheries. This ensures lower stocking densities in line with higher welfare standards, as well as health and welfare throughout hatchery, growth, transport and slaughter.

Imported products

For the limited number of products containing animal proteins imported by Lidl GB, suppliers are required to align with the policy of Lidl International with regard to responsible antibiotic use. Policies are implemented at a national level in line with national targets. For example, Lidl Germany, through its engagement with “Initiative Tierwohl” is committed to ensuring that animal health and antibiotic data is monitored across all farms from 2023. External auditors work within our international supply chains to ensure adherence to our animal welfare policies.

High Priority Critically Important Antibiotics (HPCIA's)

Where antibiotics are also used in preventative treatments for human health, these are classified as High Priority Critically Important Antimicrobials (as defined by the EMA). The recommended reduced use of these medicines is considered the priority focus. The use of 3rd and 4th generation Cephalosporins and Fluoroquinolones, together with Colistin, should only be used under veterinary permission, as a last resort, demonstrated by culture and sensitivity testing, or in exceptional circumstances when all else has failed. The use of these HP-CIA medicines should be restricted, without compromising animal welfare.

In line with the Red Tractor standards, 3rd and 4th Generation cephalosporins, glycopeptides and colistin are not permitted within our British Poultry supply chain. We are actively working with our supply chain to move away from using these HPCIA's within other categories where possible.

Data collection and training

Working with the British Farming Sector

We monitor antibiotic use in our supply chains through a range of measures, actively working with the following industry bodies to successfully monitor and reduce the overall use of antibiotics:

- FIIA
- RUMA
- Red Tractor Assurance
- RSPCA Assurance
- AHDB e-Med Hub/ EMB-Pigs
- BPC
- Individual CSR plans with our strategic suppliers



We believe that through monitoring progress at a sector level we are able to support our direct suppliers on actions to implement responsible antibiotic use, rather than using valuable time on duplicate reporting. This approach aligns with our wider commitment to 'Backing British Farming'.

Through our ongoing commitment to the Red Tractor Assurance scheme, our suppliers and producers are required to collect and submit their medicine records for third party review. Data is collected from our beef, lamb and dairy producers through farm-owned medicine records. These are reviewed with their partnered vet and collated on an annual basis. Our pork suppliers upload medicine data onto the pork industry's eMB (Electronic Medicines book) platform on a quarterly basis and for our poultry producers, The British Poultry Council (BPC) collect and publish data on an annual basis. Data from industry-level reporting is reviewed and discussed between Lidl and its suppliers.

Primary data collection from strategic suppliers

We are currently focusing on the primary data collection of antibiotic usage from key areas of our fresh poultry and dairy supply chains. We have committed to publishing this data periodically on our website and are also aligning with the FIIA for a consistent approach to data reporting at a national level. For example, the farmers in our key dairy supplier reduced the amount of HP-CIAs they used by 71% year on year in 2019/2020. This data is separated according to the different production systems that supply us.

We also have CSR business plans with our key pork, beef and lamb suppliers and we are committed to developing our data collection processes and reporting alongside our suppliers, and the industry, to publish this data efficiently and systematically. This will form part of our long-term supply agreements with strategic suppliers and data will be made available on our website.

A sample of industry-level reporting and supplier level reporting is currently available on our [website](#).

The RUMA Target Taskforce has developed various standards to help towards their antibiotic reduction targets across the industry sectors. The recommendation of on-farm data collection aims to aid the continual discussion between farmers and their vets, on the responsible use of antibiotics.

The Taskforce also encourages improved training across the sectors, and therefore promotes consistency from those administering medicines and collating the data at a site level. Updates on the progression towards these targets are publicly disclosed on an annual basis.

Research and innovation

We have partnered with The University of Glasgow School of Veterinary Medicine on a four-year research and innovation project, supporting post-graduate research in anti-microbial resistance (AMR), specific to the dairy sector in Scotland. As part of Lidl's ongoing commitment to source responsibly, the project focuses on addressing the known gap between understanding farmer attitudes and supporting the industry to deliver responsible antibiotic usage. This forms part of the retailer's ongoing support for RUMA's antibiotic reduction targets.

By sponsoring the University of Glasgow and working closely with their team we have coordinated with the entire Scottish dairy supply chain, allowing a survey to be sent out to a large swath of Scottish dairy farmers.

These farmers play a critical role in ensuring animal health and welfare and by answering this survey they are able to share their expertise and inform future policy.

