

DAIRYSAFE has an obligation to actively promote food safety learnings that are important to your business.

Key points –

- Dairysafe audits have identified anomalies in antibiotic management
- Mis-management of registered veterinary chemicals can be a risk to your business and to industry
- Withholding periods are set to ensure that chemical residues, if any, in milk are below the MRL's



This bulletin is to provide information and focus dairy farmers attention on the use of veterinary chemicals.

Recent audits have identified anomalies with 'off script' or usage outside of manufacturers recommendations. Correct agricultural and veterinary chemical usage, including adherence with specified Withholding Periods are areas crucial for the dairy industry and stakeholders.

Key areas identified for managing residue risk are:

- ensuring withholding periods are being adhered to; with management accurately recorded.
- ensuring that milk from treated animals is clearly identified and segregated.
- ensuring the use of veterinary medicines accurately follows the prescribed usage described on the label.

Registered veterinary chemicals being used in a manner not specified on the label is alarming and can be a significant risk to industry.

Examples of mis-use include:

- use of dry cow treatment on lactating cows
- use of treatments more frequently than prescribed, and
- using treatments for longer than prescribed

By law, farmers treating major species, such as cattle, sheep, pigs or chickens, with an over-the-counter veterinary chemical must use a product that is registered for the intended purpose or get written authorisation from a vet to use the product contrary to the label directions. They cannot be used in an off-label manner on major species unless the farmer follows the written instructions of a vet.



The milk Withholding Period for dairy animals is the minimum time after an animal is treated with a veterinary medicine before it may be legally returned to the milking herd. Withholding Periods are set to ensure that chemical residues, if any, in the milk are below the Maximum Residue Limit (MRL) allowed for that chemical in food in Australia.

The ultimate objective is to protect consumers and the integrity of Australia's dairy industry. We sincerely welcome any feedback that delivers the best outcome for the industry and its consumers.

Minimum requirements – food safety system

- All drugs and teat dips must be registered
- Veterinary drugs must be used in accordance with manufacturer's directions (as labelled)
- Veterinary drugs must be stored in a secure manner with dry cow and lactating drugs stored separately
- Milk from animals treated with veterinary drugs must be isolated as per the label
- Farm staff administering veterinary drugs should be trained

Records of use must be kept stating:

- date of use
- drug used
- reason for treatment
- rate of application or administration
- who applied or administered the drug
- identification of cow/s treated, tag number, and method of identification for the milker
- withholding period and clearance date
- farm staff training

When not in use, drugs must be contained and stored in a manner whereby the drugs do not pose a risk to milk safety.



Please contact the Dairysafe team if you have any questions or concerns
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Dairysafe's regulatory management system is certified to the ISO 9001:2015 Quality Standard