

# Antibiotic-Free Poultry Production:

Understanding Producer and Consumer Perspectives

**SAMPLE  
EXCERPT**

# ANTIBIOTIC-FREE POULTRY PRODUCTION | CONTENTS

<b>I. INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>II. THE SCIENCE OF PRODUCING ABF POULTRY .....</b>	<b>5-25</b>
Poultry antibiotics policy begs for science, data.....	6
Poultry superbug claims rejected as scaremongering.....	10
New antibiotic could be game changer in fight against resistance.....	12
Agriculture’s role in antibiotic resistance .....	14
Antibiotic use deserves serious talks, not scare tactics .....	18
Antibiotic resistance not solved by livestock curbs alone.....	20
AAAP: Poultry health, welfare ‘should not be sacrificed in the name of marketing’ .....	23
AFBF president cautious about antibiotic-free production.....	24
Why you should care about antibiotic resistance .....	26
<b>III. THE CHALLENGES OF RAISING ABF POULTRY .....</b>	<b>28-70</b>
Economic effects of antibiotic use in poultry, pig production .....	29
7 keys to antibiotic-free poultry production.....	30
Teamwork required in antibiotic-free poultry production.....	33
Antibiotic-free broiler production is sustainable.....	35
Producing chicken without antibiotics requires a plan.....	37
Secrets to antibiotic-free poultry production .....	39
Infographic: 6 myths about poultry production .....	45
Life without antibiotics in poultry production.....	46
The future of antibiotic use in poultry production.....	51
Formulating livestock diets without antibiotics: the cost issues.....	53
Will antibiotic-free broiler producers be competitive?.....	55
5 tips for raising healthy antibiotic-free poultry .....	56
Genomic selection and antibiotic-free broilers .....	59
Antibiotic-free chicken: The industry under the microscope.....	61
Animal protein producer panel discusses antibiotic use.....	63
Almost half of chickens in U.S. not fed growth promoting antibiotics.....	65
Yeast, a good choice to produce antibiotic-free poultry.....	67
Essential oils key to reducing antibiotics in poultry .....	68
Gut health vital to antibiotic-free poultry production .....	70
<b>IV. THE SUPPLY CHAIN AND ABF REQUIREMENTS .....</b>	<b>71-78</b>
Poultry supply chain discusses antibiotics, consumer trust.....	72
Quick video shares much about animal antibiotic use .....	78
<b>V. THE CONSUMER AND THE MARKETING OF ABF CHICKEN .....</b>	<b>80-96</b>
Consumer panel: Treat sick animals with antibiotics.....	81
Antibiotic-free chicken and the ‘unreasonable consumer’.....	83
Most Americans have misperceptions about chicken and hormones.....	84
Pilgrim’s entering organic chicken market.....	85
Taco Bell to cut chicken treated with human antibiotics .....	87
Antibiotic resistance confusion revealed in survey.....	89
GNP Gold’n Plump brand to be antibiotic-free by 2019 .....	90

# ANTIBIOTIC-FREE POULTRY PRODUCTION | CONTENTS

<b>V. THE REGULATIONS INFLUENCING ABF LIVESTOCK.....</b>	<b>92-96</b>
Infographic: Veterinary Feed Directive timeline.....	93
What the Veterinary Feed Directive means for the poultry industry .....	94
Will the VFD reduce antibiotic resistance in U.S.? .....	96
<b>VI. THE WORLD FOOD CHAIN AND THE ABF MOVEMENT .....</b>	<b>98-112</b>
Infographic: OIE strategy to fight antimicrobial resistance .....	99
How prudent is antibiotic use in the poultry industry? .....	100
UK poultry meat sector cuts antibiotic use by 44 percent .....	104
German poultry, livestock farmers face more antibiotic scrutiny .....	106
European veterinary antibiotic use on the decline.....	107
New Zealand antibiotic pledge to bring added benefits .....	109
European Animal Health Law adopted .....	111
EU antibiotic growth promoter ban not most costly regulation .....	112
<b>VII. ANTIBIOTIC-FREE POULTRY VIDEOS .....</b>	<b>114-115</b>
Panel discusses antibiotic-free chicken production at IPPE.....	115
Have we reached the tipping point in demand for antibiotic-free chicken? .....	115
Impact of feed quality on antibiotic-free poultry production .....	115
Antibiotic-free poultry production requires teamwork .....	115
Can chickens perform as well in an antibiotic-free production system? .....	115
How Perdue moved toward antibiotic-free chicken .....	115
How important is antibiotic-free chicken production to consumers? .....	115
Trends in antibiotic use, poultry welfare .....	115
How feed quality impacts production of antibiotic-free chicken.....	115
How removing antibiotics has impacted poultry performance at Perdue .....	115
Video: Veterinarians speak on antibiotic-free poultry production .....	115

# INTRODUCTION

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Successful antibiotic-free poultry production requires understanding producer and consumer perspectives including marketing, regulations and science. This collection of exclusive and in-depth articles from the acclaimed editors of *WATT Poultry USA* and *Poultry International* magazines and many expert contributors, will provide you with highly valuable insights that intend to help you strengthen and grow your poultry business.

The production of poultry and livestock without antibiotics has gone from a niche market to the mainstream in a matter of years. Increased awareness about the dangers of antimicrobial resistance has increased consumer and government pressure for a prudent use of antibiotics, extending beyond human health care to focus on antibiotic administration in animal agriculture. It's been widely reported that antibiotic residues in meat are responsible for increased incidents of resistance; however, antibiotic contamination in carcasses is virtually non-existent.

A disconnect between livestock producers and consumers has created a lack of trust and a movement for a more transparent food supply chain. Consumers are looking for and buying poultry raised without antibiotics and many national and international fast-food chains and restaurants have announced they will only serve antibiotic-free meats, which is creating new challenges for poultry and livestock producers. Growing consumer and regulatory pressure raises the question of whether antibiotic use in livestock production could end in the coming years.

The challenges of raising healthy ABF flocks requires changes in production techniques and management strategies like biosecurity measures, which significantly impact poultry health and performance. Producers have raised concerns that removing all antibiotics can increase flock mortality rates from common poultry diseases like coccidiosis and necrotic enteritis.

In 2017, The U.S. Food and Drug Administration's Veterinary Feed Directive (VFD), which will ban the use of growth promoting antibiotics the FDA deems medically important to humans, will go into effect. Under the VFD, all antibiotics for livestock must be under direct veterinary supervision so they are only used when necessary for assuring animal health.

The World Organization for Animal Health also has developed a set of international standards for animal antibiotic use to help protect the effectiveness of antibiotics used in veterinary medicine. Europe is the first major market to restrict the use of antibiotics in meat and poultry production, which has increased production costs in the EU. U.S. poultry producers and the rest of the world are watching carefully and studying how to transition to relying less on antibiotics and using nutritional additives and alternative feed ingredients for healthy birds.

It is critical to stay on top of the most important issues impacting our industry today to remain competitive. The WATT Global Media Focus Series was created to help you achieve that objective, and ultimately succeed in reaching your business goals.