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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Note: This is the third of an eight-part series from the National Institute for Animal Agriculture (NIAA), with thought leadership and technical support from Merck Animal Health. The One Health series explores antimicrobial resistance and the collaborative efforts between ranchers, and animal health and human health experts to explore the issue.

Video package available at:

<https://vimeo.com/289375139/5ff0fd771d>

Photo available upon request.

One Health Series:

Health and Wellness: A Veterinarian's Perspective on Antibiotics

ASHLAND, Kan. — For humans and animals alike, health is often determined long before treatment becomes necessary. Stress and poor nutrition are leading precursors to disease.

That's why Dr. Randall Spare works with clients of his Ashland, Kan., veterinary clinic to implement holistic management and health plans to give animals their best chance at success — and to reduce dependence on antibiotics.

“We have to understand that antibiotics are a finite resource. We need to think about, before we need to use them, what can we do to set these animals up to succeed,” Spare says. “There are so many management practices that we can do on the ranch, before they leave, so that antibiotics don't need to be used.”

Weaning strategies, vaccinations and essential nutrition top Spare's list of management practices to ensure overall health. However, even the best-kept herds will face disease. That's when the strategic use of antibiotics is critical, Spare says, emphasizing *strategic*.

“We're using antibiotics in a very judicious way. We're using them to help ensure animals have the proper care when they do get sick,” Spare notes. “Producers are really concerned about how they are using those antibiotics. Making sure we are using them in a timely fashion, so they will kill bacteria and perform effectively. We're using better metrics. We're using not only temperature, but animal temperament, to develop metrics to determine whether this calf needs to be treated.”

Spare is involved with the National Institute for Animal Agriculture's “One Health Initiative” to address

resistance in both animal and human health.

In addition to a “whole picture” approach toward herd health, he believes more education should be targeted to consumers about how antibiotics are used in livestock production.

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“Antibiotic use and judicious use of antibiotics and animal welfare — they all fit together,” he says. “I think that we need to educate ourselves, and at every chance, communicate with consumers that we’re being good stewards of the antibiotics and also to the livestock. We need to communicate how we’re using antibiotics.”

Proactive herd management and responsible antibiotics use – both are part of the One Health conversation. The National Institute for Animal Agriculture encourages all producers to take part in it this fall during its 8th annual Antibiotic Symposium. Titled “New Science & Technology Tools for Antibiotic Stewardship,” the event takes place Nov. 13-15 in Kansas City. Visit animalagriculture.org to learn more.

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About the One Health series:

This series of video and print-ready resources is provided with support from Merck Animal Health and brought to you by the National Institute for Animal Agriculture (NIAA), which works with industry producers, leaders and others to address issues concerning animal agriculture. This is an eight-part series that explores NIAA’s ongoing One Health initiative to collaboratively address antimicrobial resistance (AMR) in the animal and human health sectors.

About NIAA:

The National Institute for Animal Agriculture (NIAA) was established in 2000 to provide a forum to facilitate and engage industry leaders and organizations to derive solutions on the most current issues in animal agriculture. Its members include producers, veterinarians, scientists, and government and allied industry representatives.

NIAA is dedicated to programs that work toward the eradication of diseases that pose a risk to the health of animals, wildlife and humans. It also promotes a safe and wholesome food supply and best practices for animal health and well-being as well as environmental stewardship. NIAA issue initiatives encompass the entire animal agriculture field including cattle, sheep, swine, avian, equine and aquaculture industries. More information is available at animalagriculture.org.