



Representing the Manufacturers of Animal Medicines

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Press Release

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New Veterinary Residues Committee report : good news on veterinary residues

The independent Veterinary Residues Committee report for 2002, published on 15 December, shows that: 'overall, the results of the National Surveillance Scheme indicate that the UK authorised uses of veterinary medicinal products did not result in results of human health concern.'

"Once again, there's good news on veterinary residues on food. The report is excellent and shows animal medicines are being used responsibly," said Phil Sketchley, NOAH chief executive. "There was a small increase in residues above the Maximum Residue Limit (MRL), but the committee explained that the results were not directly comparable to last year, because the information gleaned in 2001 meant that in 2002 the sampling was concentrated in those areas where problems were thought to be more likely to arise. This means that the safety of people consuming livestock produce can more effectively be ensured."

This year, there were a small number of residues which merited further consideration. For UK produce, the committee was able to lay out actions that were being taken to ensure these did not recur. Work is also going on to spread 'best practice' to avoid residues, particularly of feed additives, which although posing no risk, nevertheless should not be there. It also continues to be vital that imports are strictly monitored, so that the Food Standards Agency

(FSA) can operate the Europe-wide alert system if potentially harmful residues are discovered.

“We welcome the fact that by publishing the results in this way, action can be taken to stamp out those very few areas where misunderstanding occurs or even misuse is taking place. Animal medicines need to satisfy very stringent criteria on quality, efficacy and safety before they can be allowed onto the market. NOAH, for example through the work of the RUMA Alliance, supports and welcomes moves to make sure they are used properly,” said Mr Sketchley.

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NOTES TO EDITORS

- For further information, please contact Philip Sketchley or Alison Glennon of NOAH, telephone 020 8367 3131 or Andrew Kendall, Kendalls PR, telephone 01394 610022, or visit the NOAH website, www.noah.co.uk
- The National Office of Animal Health was formed on 1st January 1986 to represent the UK companies which research, develop, manufacture and market licensed animal health products. The association now has 34 corporate members and 14 associate members. In 2002, NOAH's members accounted for well over 90 per cent of the £389 million UK animal health market.
- The Veterinary Residues Committee annual report can be viewed on the VRC's website <http://www.vet-residues-committee.gov.uk>. The full set of results of analyses undertaken can also be viewed on the VRC's or Veterinary Medicine Directorate's website, <http://www.vmd.gov.uk>.
- NOAH is a member of the RUMA (Responsible Use of Medicines in Agriculture) Alliance. RUMA was established in November 1997 to promote the highest standards of food safety, animal health and animal welfare in British livestock farming. A unique initiative involving organisations representing every stage of the "farm to fork" process, RUMA aims to promote a co-ordinated and integrated approach to best practice. For more information see www.ruma.org.uk.