

UNDER EMBARGO UNTIL:
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**PIJAC RELEASES RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ANTIBIOTIC STEWARDSHIP
IN THE PET CARE COMMUNITY**

Resource was developed by pet care, veterinary and health care experts to help combat antimicrobial resistance health risks

ORLANDO, Fla. – March 21, 2019 – The Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council (PIJAC) today unveiled an industry-wide, comprehensive set of recommendations for antibiotic stewardship and combatting antimicrobial resistance (AMR) in companion animals. The announcement was made at an event PIJAC hosted during the Global Pet Expo trade show at the Orange County Convention Center.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that two million people are infected with resistant strains of bacteria and 23,000 deaths result from antibiotic resistance in the U.S. annually. Two relatively common bacteria species that have resistant strains, *Campylobacter* and *Salmonella*, are also common in pets, making responsible use of antibiotics in companion animals an important concern.

“Antibiotic resistant germs are a growing and serious health risk to both humans and animals,” said Savonne Caughey, PIJAC director of government affairs. “Last year, PIJAC committed to work with the pet care community to create best management practices to combat AMR as part of our participation in the U.S. government’s Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) Challenge.”

The recommendations encompass a unified set of principles for all sectors of the pet care community, with an emphasis on those involved in the breeding, rearing, transport and sale of companion animals as well as those who work with products where antibiotics regularly intersect with animals. They provide expert advice and best management practices on topics including use of antibiotics, sanitation, hygiene, veterinary oversight and zoonotic disease prevention, among others.

“PIJAC is proud to have served as the pet industry’s liaison on public health issues and zoonotic disease prevention for over a decade through our memorandum of understanding with the CDC,” said PIJAC president and CEO Mike Bober. “These recommendations are another demonstration of PIJAC and the pet care community’s commitment to promoting the health and well-being of animals and humans alike.”

PIJAC piloted the guide's development through an extensive process of gathering resources, conducting research and consulting with specialists, professionals, and others in a variety of pet care roles. The final recommendations were developed by a working group comprised of stakeholders and experts including pet care retailers, breeders, distributors, authorities in animal care, and representatives from the veterinary medicine and health communities and other trade associations.

"This is the first-ever set of recommendations for antibiotic stewardship in the pet care community," said PIJAC Board Chair Laura "Peach" Reid, president of Fish Mart, Inc., in West Haven, Conn. "With widespread adoption, they will help inhibit the development of resistant germs and ensure healthier pets and healthier people around the world."

PIJAC and other organizations involved in the working group will be distributing the recommendations to their members and promoting them at pet care industry and related events throughout 2019. The document will also be available for download on the pijac.org website.

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Since 1970, the Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council (PIJAC) has protected pets, pet owners and the pet industry – promoting responsible pet ownership and animal welfare, fostering environmental stewardship, and ensuring the availability of pets. PIJAC members include retailers, companion animal suppliers, manufacturers, wholesale distributors, manufacturers' representatives, pet hobbyists, and other trade organizations.