Qualitätssicherung. **Vom Landwirt bis zur Ladentheke.**

Guideline
**Antibiotics Monitoring
Poultry**

QS. Ihr Prüfsystem
für Lebensmittel.

Contents

1 Basic principles

With the systematic recording of antibiotics applications and deliveries in a central database, the industry creates a solid inter-company data basis. This gives all those involved the opportunity to recognize the actual situation regarding the use of antibiotics and identify areas where action is needed. A proper evaluation guarantees the necessary transparency for future action – reduction strategies can be derived and implemented.

1.1 Objective

The monitoring shall contribute to the continuous optimization of the use of antibiotics in livestock farming and to reducing the risk of antibiotics resistance development.

1.2 Scope of application

This guideline serves as a binding guide for the implementation of the antibiotics monitoring in fattening poultry and breeding poultry. All companies in the QS scheme which farm broilers, turkeys or their breeding poultry or which farm peking ducks are obliged to participate in the antibiotics monitoring. The antibiotics database can also be used by livestock owners who do not participate in the QS scheme. They must register in the QS scheme via a coordinator and sign a commitment (contractual agreement between livestock owner and coordinator) in order to use the antibiotics database. This guideline is therefore intended for

- Livestock owners of broilers, turkeys and their breeding poultry as well as livestock owners of peking ducks participating in the antibiotics monitoring in the QS scheme,
- coordinators and
- veterinary practices/veterinarians (including veterinarians working for animal health services, marketers, conglomerations, scientific institutions etc.) who deliver antibiotics to poultry farming companies participating in the antibiotics monitoring in the QS scheme.

1.3 Responsibilities

Livestock owners, coordinators and veterinarians must always comply with the requirements in the QS scheme and prove that compliance at all times. The QS criteria are based on the requirements of good professional practice. Livestock owners, coordinators and veterinarians must ensure that, in addition to the requirements of this guideline and the other applicable QS requirements (e.g. General Regulations Guideline, Guideline Certification), the applicable legal provisions (comparable foreign legal provisions outside Germany) are fulfilled. Further, there are specific responsibilities.

Livestock owners

The livestock owners are responsible for a complete and correct report of their master and production data. Any changes must be notified immediately to their coordinator.

The livestock owners may only obtain antibiotics from veterinarians who are registered in the QS scheme and are responsible for checking the complete and correct documentation of antibiotics applications and deliveries on their company in the antibiotics database. If a livestock owner recognizes that his veterinarian has not entered all or any data in the antibiotics database or that the data entered is incorrect, he shall ask his veterinarian to complete or correct the data. If the data is not completed or corrected by the veterinarian, the livestock owner shall inform QS. The documentation of the antibiotics applications and deliveries has to begin with the registration in the QS scheme and is therefore also obligatory for scheme applicants.

In addition, the purchase and use of antibiotics must comply with the requirements of the Guideline Agriculture Poultry Production and Guideline Agriculture Breeding Poultry, refer to **www.q-s.de**:

⇒ Guideline Agriculture Poultry Production

⇒ Guideline Agriculture Breeding Poultry

The livestock owners are further responsible to actively confirm in the antibiotics database if no antibiotics have been applied for a flock in their fattening or breeding poultry farming company. The livestock owners can transfer the responsibility of the confirmation in the antibiotics data base to the coordinator or veterinarian.

Coordinators/sub-coordinators

The coordinators are responsible for a complete and correct report of the master and production data of the companies they take care of in the QS software platform and the antibiotics database. This also includes information on the production sites and the number of averagely housed animals per production site.

The coordinators inform participating companies at least once a quarter about the therapy index or actively inform the livestock owners about the recalculation of the therapy index. The coordinators submit the access data to the QS software platform (username and password) to the livestock owners. Via the QS software platform, the livestock owners gain access to the antibiotics database.

A coordinator can assign a sub-coordinator to perform certain coordinator tasks. In relation to the monitoring programmes, this includes all tasks. However, the coordinator remains responsible for the implementation of the requirements as a contractual partner of QS.

The coordinators may also be supported by marketers or conglomerations. This requires written agreements.

Veterinarians

The veterinarians are responsible for entering the relevant data on antibiotics applications or deliveries into the antibiotics database. For this, the veterinary practices/veterinarians register with QS in the antibiotics database (**http://www.vetproof.de**). The veterinarians must at all times comply with the requirements of the declaration of commitment, which has to be be accepted upon registration. Further, the veterinarians must always be able to demonstrate compliance with said declaration of commitment.

2 Antibiotics database

The antibiotics database is the data processing system for a comprehensive registration and evaluation of all antibiotics applications or deliveries in the QS scheme and can be reached on the internet via **https://db.vetproof.de**.

2.1 Maintenance of master data of agricultural companies

The following master data of agricultural companies is automatically transferred into the antibiotics database from the QS software platform and is regularly synchronized with it:

- Address with name, first name, street, house number, post code, town,
- company registration number according to the Livestock movement order (Germany: Viehverkehrsverordnung → VVVO number),
- QS identification number and
- contract date (generally corresponds to the obligatory date for participation in antibiotics monitoring).

Additionally, the following information must be stored by the coordinators in the antibiotics database for each company (VVVO number) and production group:

- Production site: Stable/stable name, number of animal places and
- Flock data: Date of entry, number of animals, date(s) of exit, number of animals.

If no information on the production site is available, the livestock owner loses the eligibility of delivery to the QS scheme until the information has been updated.

The flock data must be updated immediately after the animals have been stabled in, but always before the first application or delivery of antibiotics, so that the antibiotics application and delivery forms can be linked to the treated animals/flock.

The antibiotics database checks the completeness of the flock data on a daily basis. If a company is registered with several production sites, the flock data must be available for at least one production site. If no flock data are available for a company keeping poultry within a period of

- Broiler or turkey breeder farming (301, 304): 380 days
- Broiler production (3001): 75 days
- Turkey rearing (3002): 70 days
- Turkey production (3004): 140 days
- Turkey production (combined, 3006): 180 days
- Peking duck rearing (3008): 45 days
- Peking duck production (3016): 55 days
- Peking duck production (combined, 3024): 75 days

the company loses its eligibility to deliver into the QS scheme until this information has been updated.

The antibiotics database also checks the completeness of the exit data. If a flock within the last year that is older than

- Broiler or turkey breeder farming (301, 304): 380 days
- Broiler production (3001): 75 days
- Turkey rearing (3002): 70 days
- Turkey production (3004): 140 days
- Turkey production (combined, 3006): 180 days
- Peking duck rearing (3008): 45 days
- Peking duck production (3016): 55 days
- Peking duck production (combined, 3024): 75 days

has no exit data and is not marked as "completely reduced" in the antibiotics database, the company loses its eligibility to deliver into the QS scheme. The age of the flock is calculated on the basis of the stored entry date. A herd is completely reduced when the number of animals is reduced to zero or when the flock is marked as "completely reduced" if there are several exit dates (preliminary destocking, transferring, loss etc.).

2.2 Registration of veterinarians

Veterinarians who apply or deliver antibiotics on companies participating in the antibiotics monitoring in the QS scheme must be registered in the antibiotics database. For this purpose, the veterinary practice/the veterinarian registers online in the antibiotics database under **http://www.vetproof.de**. In the following, the registration documents (declaration of commitment and data protection declaration) are dispatched by e-mail. If an online registration is not possible, a written registration can be made with QS. The registration documents will then be sent by post or e-mail. After signing and returning the declaration of commitment as well as the data protection declaration, the registration in the antibiotics database is successfully completed.

2.3 Activation of veterinarians

Each livestock owner instructs his coordinator to activate the antibiotics database for the veterinarian(s) who apply or deliver antibiotics on the respective company. A search function (name or address) can be used to check in the antibiotics database whether a veterinary practice/a veterinarian is registered. If there is no veterinarian allocated to a poultry farming company, the company loses its eligibility to deliver into the QS scheme until the information has been supplemented.

2.4 Registration of antibiotics applications and deliveries by veterinarians

The recording of antibiotics applications and deliveries in the antibiotics database is carried out either via input masks or via interfaces. The veterinary practice/veterinarian reports each application and delivery of medicinal products containing substances with antibiotic effect and assigns them to the company with the corresponding production group and flock (if known). If the application or delivery of antibiotics is carried out by a veterinary practice, traceability within the veterinary practice to the veterinarian treating the animal(s) must be ensured. When reporting the data, a distinction is made between obligatory and voluntary information.

From the veterinary drug record ("drugs delivery and application document ") must and can (voluntarily) be reported:

- Name of the responsible veterinarian
- Document number
- Date of delivery (in accordance with drugs delivery and application document)
- VVVO number of the company to which the veterinary drug was supplied
- Production scope of the company (production groups fattening poultry 3001 to 3031, production groups breeding poultry 301, 304)
- Production group of the treated animals (animal production 301, 304, 3001, 3002, 3004, 3006, 3008 or 3016)
- Stable name/number (production site)
- Number of animals to be treated
- Veterinary drug
- Amount applied/delivered
- Duration of treatment with days of effect
- Flock designation   (voluntary)
  If the flock designation is not given, the database links the application or delivery by the dates of ingoing animals.
- Indication   (voluntary)
- Diagnosis details   (voluntary)
- Application form   (voluntary)
- Dosage per animal per day   (voluntary)
- Treatment day (date)   (voluntary)
- Waiting time   (voluntary)
- Treatment instructions   (voluntary)
- Batch number   (voluntary)
- Usage duration   (voluntary).

Entering the data regarding the antibiotics applications and deliveries has to be finished in a timely manner but no later than four weeks after the end of the relevant calendar quarter. If the antibiotic is not consumed completely, a return record (if veterinarian takes back remaining quantity) or a zero amount record (if follow-up prescription of remaining quantity) can be created.

QS veterinary drug catalogue for poultry

Only veterinary medicinal products whose active agents are listed in the QS veterinary drug catalogue for poultry may be applied and delivered, see **www.q-s.de**:

⇒ annex 4.1 QS veterinary drug catalogue for poultry

The QS veterinary drug catalogue for poultry is based on all approved veterinary medicinal products in Germany for food-producing animals. The QS veterinary drug catalogue for poultry is regularly updated on the basis of the VETIDATA database (Veterinary Information Service for Drug Application, Toxicology and Drug Law, **www.vetidata.de**).

When using the listed active agents, the waiting period indicated on the pharmaceutical used, which is based on the approval, is always legally binding. If the approved waiting period is shorter than 48 hours, a minimum waiting period of 48 hours (= two days) must be maintained.

When applying and delivering veterinary medicinal products from abroad, the specific regulations of the German Medicines Act must be observed. The waiting time specified in the QS veterinary drug catalogue for poultry for each active agent must be sticked to.

Herds without antibiotic treatment

If no animal of a flock is treated with antibiotics, this must be actively confirmed in the antibiotics database by the livestock owner, the coordinator or the veterinarian. The responsibility for the completeness of the data lies with the livestock owner.

2.5 Data protection/Data access

The data in the antibiotics database are only available to authorized users. Specific access regulations exist. All users have access to the data only after registration in the antibiotics database. Each authorized user receives a username and password via the database administration.

Livestock owners

The livestock owners have access to all data available in the antibiotics database for their company. This includes master data, data on production sites, data on in- and outgoing animals, data on antibiotics applications and deliveries with all mandatory and voluntary data entered as well as evaluations and statistics.

Coordinators/sub-coordinators

The coordinators have access to master data, data on production sites, data on in- and outgoing animals and evaluations of the companies they manage. With regard to antibiotics applications and deliveries, they only receive information on the delivery date, the identity of the treated animal group, the number of animals treated and whether the antibiotics are critical. If a coordinator has instructed a sub-coordinator to perform certain coordinator tasks, the sub-coordinator receives the access rights of the coordinator. With regard to the monitoring programmes, this includes all tasks and therefore also all access rights.

The livestock owner can authorize both the coordinator and the sub-coordinator to view all information from the veterinary drug records (= particularly sensitive data) in the antibiotics database. The authorization is given by the livestock owner in the antibiotics database. With this authorization the livestock owner declares that his veterinarian approves the activation of the coordinator and/or sub-coordinator. The veterinarian can recognize in the drug records of the company that the coordinator and/or sub-coordinator is allowed to see the complete veterinary drug records.

Veterinarians

The veterinarians have access to all data available in the antibiotics database of companies for which they are authorized. This includes master data, data on production sites, data on in- and outgoing animals, data on antibiotics applications and deliveries with all entered obligatory and voluntary data as well as evaluations.

Access to data on antibiotics applications and deliveries of other veterinarians, who have been granted access to a company, can only be obtained if the livestock owner authorizes this in the database. Otherwise, the veterinarian only receives information on the delivery date, the identity of the treated group of animals and the indication.

Third parties

Livestock owners may allow other persons/groups of persons (third parties) access to their data in the antibiotics database. For this, the livestock owner authorizes his coordinator in writing to clear third parties for specified information in the antibiotics database. In order to be able to access the data of a livestock owner, the third party must be registered in the antibiotics database. The registration is carried out via QS.

2.6 Evaluation of the use of antibiotics in the QS scheme

The data from the antibiotics monitoring are evaluated both on a company-specific basis and on accumulated inter-company basis. The evaluation of company-specific data enables livestock owners and veterinarians to assess the situation regarding the use of antibiotics on the company and to compare it with other companies (benchmark). The therapy index serves as measurement variable for this. The evaluation of accumulated inter-company data enables a professional presentation of the actual situation regarding the use of antibiotics as a whole and creates transparency for veterinarians and industry.

Therapy index

The therapy index describes how many treatment units per animal were administered on average over a period of time. For each antibiotics application or delivery, the number of treatment units is calculated by multiplying the number of animals treated by the duration of treatment including days of effect and the number of active substances within the pharmaceutical (see formula). The total number of treatment units per flock is calculated from the total number of antibiotics applications and deliveries of all herds that have been completely reduced within the previous two calendar quarters. The sum of the treatment units per flock is then divided by the size of the flock. The size of the flock is the sum of all ingoing animals per flock. The result represents the therapy index per flock and expresses how many treatment units per housed animal were administered in the respective flock.

$$\text{Therapy index per flock} = \frac{\sum(\text{Duration of treatment with days of effect } *\text{active substances}*\text{number of treated animals})}{\text{flock size}}$$

The therapy indices per flock are then summed and divided by the number of flocks (see formula) so that the therapy index can be defined as the number of treatment units per animal housed per flock in the previous two calendar quarters.

$$\text{Therapy index} = \frac{\sum(\text{therapy indices per flock})}{\text{number of flocks}}$$

The therapy index is calculated quarterly for each company (VVVO number) and separately for each production group. It can only be calculated if for a company in the calendar quarters considered on the one hand herd data and completely reduced flocks and on the other hand either veterinary drug records or the information that no antibiotics have been applied are available in the antibiotics database separately for each production group.

Therapy index for selected classes of antibiotics

The use of antibiotics in veterinary medicine from classes of active substances that are particularly important for human medicine (so-called critical antibiotics or reserve antibiotics) is increasingly viewed critically and should therefore be made transparent for livestock owners and veterinarians. A separate therapy index is therefore calculated for antibiotics containing active substances of cephalosporines of 3rd and 4th generation and fluoroquinolones and is made available to livestock owners and veterinarians.

3 Definitions

3.1 Abbreviations

VVVO   Livestock movement order (Viehverkehrsverordnung – ViehVerkV)

3.2 Terms and definitions

- **Antibiotics**
  Antibiotics are drugs containing substances with an antibacterial effect.

A list of general terms and definitions can be found in the **guideline "General Requirements"**.

4 Annexes

The following annex has been published separately.

4.1 QS veterinary drug catalogue for poultry

Revision information version 01.01.2022

Criterion/Requirement	Changes	Date of change
1.3 Responsibilities	**Change:** Instead of antibiotic delivery, antibiotic application is decisive for confirmation of herds without antibiotic treatment. Herds are to be confirmed as untreated if no antibiotics were applied to any animal of the herd.	01.01.2022
2.4 Registration of antibiotics applications and deliveries by veterinarians	**Clarification:** The date of delivery in the antibiotics database must be in accordance with the date of delivery in the drugs delivery and application document.	01.01.2022