

## Research project IZS VE 20/12

### Survey on antimicrobial consumption and resistance in industrial rabbit farms of the Veneto region

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The increasing burden of antimicrobial resistance is of concern for the European Commission (EC) which calls for intensifying surveillance on antimicrobial resistance (AMR) and antimicrobial consumption in animal medicine. The most relevant risk factor for onset of AMR is an excessive consumption of antimicrobials which may sometime to hide poor herd hygiene or biosecurity, or bad animal health practices. Veneto is the top Italian region for production of food from animal, and indeed with 38% of national production, it is also the main producer of meat from rabbits. Antimicrobial consumption seems quite high in rabbit meat production, mostly due to prevention and control of enteric diseases, however information at national level on antimicrobial consumption in this sector is missing, as well as it is lacking, or is incomplete, also in other meat producing animals species.

Consequently risk managers do lack critical information crucial for planning health measures to reduce AMR and for the planning of drug surveillance by the regional veterinary service. This project aims to reduce the above described lack of knowledge by a three years follow up study on the consumption of antimicrobials in a herd sample representative of the different breeding systems of rabbit meat production. This project will evaluate the antimicrobial consumption using the veterinary prescriptions reported to the competent authority (Az ULSS) database or registered in the herd drug recording books. In the same herds the levels and temporal trends of AMR in indicator bacteria against selected antimicrobials will be assessed together with any correlation between the consumption of antimicrobials and the hygiene and biosecurity levels.

The outcome from the project will provide the regional competent veterinary authorities with specific indicators on the application of the European Commission guidance against antimicrobial resistance. Further the same indicators will provide rabbit meat producers and pharmaceutical companies with data for the self assessment on impact of antimicrobial consumption on their productions and, more in general, it will raise awareness on the issue of AMR and antimicrobial consumption.