Farm Vet News

Endell Farm Vets Blog | Endell Vets Dairy Team | 30 Apr 2021

Annual Antimicrobial Usage Update

Last year we brought you good news, as our efforts to reduce antimicrobial usage had seen a significant decrease in overall use, alongside information on HP-CIAs (*Highest Priority – Critically Important Antibiotics*) and advice on how we can reduce usage on farms. This year we can yet again report that, as an industry, we continue to reduce our usage and have met the majority of the RUMA (*Responsible Use of Medicines in Agriculture Alliance*) targets, who have now given us a new set of targets. This article aims to summarise where we are at now and what is expected of us in the future.

2020 Targets

A recent report outlined the results from the first set of targets set out in 2015 by RUMA. The main targets for the dairy sector involved reducing intramammary lactating doses, intramammary dry cow doses and injectable HP-CIAs, as well as increasing teat sealant use. As the table below highlights all of these targets, except teat sealant use, were met and some exceeded!

Target	*Achievement*
Reduce intramammary lactating cow course doses by 10%	Reduced by 25% by 2019
Reduce intramammary dry cow course doses by 20%	Reduced by 21% by 2019
Reduce injectable HP-CIAs by 50%	Reduced by 77% by 2019
Sealant tubes increase 40% (from 0.5 to 0.7 average courses/ cow)	Target NOT reached – average in 2018 reported at 0.51

Table 1. Key RUMA 2020 Dairy Targets

Interestingly, out of the 31 European countries analysed, England had the fifth lowest antibiotic sales with 29.5mg/PCU. Cyprus had the highest antibiotic sales with 466.3mg/PCU and Norway had the lowest with 2.9mg/PCU[1].

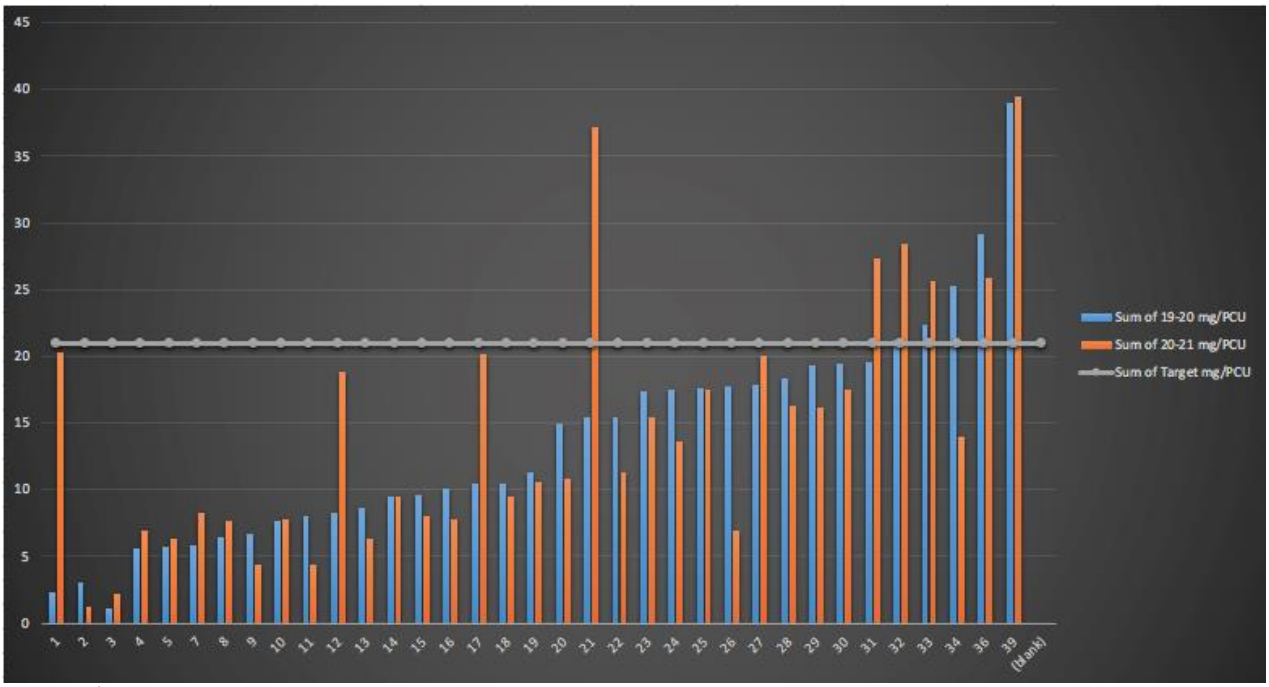
2024 Targets

This year new targets have been set out by RUMA outlining aims to reduce all antibiotic usage as well as looking specifically at the use of HP-CIAs and several health and welfare metrics, such as lameness and mortality rates. The report also talks about a new initiative that aims to develop a network of '*Farm Vet Champions*' within the next 4 years, targeting tools and training to vets to facilitate better antibiotic stewardship on farms nationwide. The table below outlines RUMA's new Dairy targets;

Dairy Indicators of Progress	
Antibiotic use (centralised data)	*15%mg/kg fall in dairy herds by 2024; baseline 2020/21* *25%mg/kg fall in calf rearing units by 2024; baseline 2020/21*
Number of calves treated	*7.5 fewer treated/100 calves by 2024; baseline 2020/21*
Sales of lactating cow tubes in dairy	*Annual reduction in 3yr rolling average; baseline of 0.69 DCDvet*
Sales of dry cow tubes in dairy	*Annual reduction in 3yr rolling average; baseline of 0.59 DCDvet*
Highest priority antibiotic use (from centralised data)	*Established baseline for calves from 2020/2021 data, then review*
Highest priority antibiotic sales	*Reduction in cattle injectables by 2024; baseline 0.26mg/kg* *Reduction in intramammary tubes for dairy cows by 2024; baseline 0.03 DCDvet*
Mortality rates	*Mortality falls in beef & dairy cows; baseline 2020*
Health and welfare metrics	*Fall in dairy lameness and mastitis from various 2019 indicators*

Table 2. Key RUMA 2024 Dairy Targets

ENDELL DAIRY DATA



Graph 2. Sum of mg/PCU for each dairy for the last two years

This year we have again analysed each dairy's mg/PCU, using data on all medicines sold from 2020, and compared it to that of the previous year. As you can see from the graph below, 85% our dairies remain below the target of 21mg/PCU. In addition, around 60% of farms saw a decrease in mg/PCU from 2019 to 2020, which is a fantastic result particularly as, compared to the national average, total antibiotic usage on our farms already trends towards the lower end.

Some significant increases were seen in mg/PCU on individual farms and there are several reasons why this occurred, including disease outbreaks and drug buying habits. It is important to remember that these figures are not perfect as the data relates to what is sold rather than what is used; an issue that we and RUMA are hoping to change in the near future by the use of on farm medicine records.

This year we are also happy to report that NO HP-CIAs were sold to dairy farms within our practice, which is excellent news! We continue to try to reduce the use of WHO classified HP-CIAs, such as Draxxin and Tylan, and are really pleased with the response we have been getting on farm.

Each dairy will be sent a letter with their next invoice detailing their usage and position on the graph, this should be the same number as last year. Your routine vet will also be provided with a copy to help stimulate discussions and provide further advice. Alternatively, please contact the office who can put you in touch with one of our vets.

UNIFORM-AGRI

Endell farm vets has recently purchased licences for the use of Uniform-Agri Pro, the professional software which links in with on-farm Uniform-Agri dairy software. With NMR announcing that InterHerd has reached its terminal phase, farms may be starting to consider other alternatives. Through permission sharing, your vet can access live cloud-based data for your cows, giving them an up-to-date insight into cow performance, and doing away with the need for collecting those pesky back-ups! Please be reassured, Uniform-Agri Pro only allows data to be viewed, so there is no risk of the clumsy vet deleting cow records!

SUMMARY

As an industry, we have met the majority of the targets set out by RUMA however there is always room for improvement and new targets to be reached in 2024 have been set. We continue to try and reduce overall antimicrobial usage, as well as maintaining animal health and welfare, in order to preserve antibiotics and reduce resistance among bacteria for human and animal health of the future. There are many ways to reduce AMU on farm, many of which have previously been discussed in our dairy blog post '*Antimicrobial usage update' Feb 2020*, which is available on our website. Alternatively you can contact the practice on 01722 333291 to request a hard copy of the blog or to speak to one of our vet team.

Written by Lillith Walton BVetMed MRCVS, on behalf of Endell Vets Dairy Team

References: 1. https://www.ruma.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/SO-469-RUMA-REPORT-021220.pdf