

Fenbendazole (Safe-Guard ®) Use in Turkeys – Revised CgFARAD Recommended Withdrawal Time

Memorandum

To: Poultry Practitioners, Turkey Farmers of Canada and the Canadian Poultry and Egg Processors Council
From: Canadian Animal Health Institute – Further to consultation with CFIA, Health Canada and CgFARAD

Veterinarians often prescribe Fenbendazole at 30 ppm for 7 days in turkeys, starting at 10 days of age in feed, to manage roundworm infestations. Discussions were held with representatives of the above-mentioned organizations on November 6, 2017 to discuss the issuance of an updated CgFARAD recommended withdrawal time (RWT) for extra-label drug use of Fenbendazole from 13 days to 39 days in turkeys. The challenge is that in Canada Fenbendazole does not have an established Maximum Residue Limit (MRL) and use of the product is not considered to be a human food safety issue. This means that the level of detection (LOD) becomes the default enforcement standard. The recent findings of CgFARAD resulted in a new 39-day RWT to avoid residue detection based on the validated assay used by CFIA.

The November 6 discussion focused on how to manage compliance and enforcement for turkeys treated with Fenbendazole as per the veterinary recommendations at the time of treatment. It is anticipated that for the next 1-2 months flock sheet information shared with the processing plant will have the 13-day RWT based on the practitioner's knowledge when it was prescribed, which was prior to the new direction from CgFARAD.

It was agreed that turkeys going to slaughter under the 13-day RWT be accepted at processing plants and be subjected to the regular meat testing program.

If a turkey flock is tested and found positive, the Veterinary Drugs Directorate at Health Canada and CFIA will work together to issue a risk assessment from a human food safety perspective.

The data available to-date confirm that birds treated at 30 ppm for 7 days show low level residues that are not associated with a human food safety concern. It is thus unlikely that there will be any turkey condemnations at the processing level for turkeys treated with Fenbendazole extra-label.

Note: If a producer or veterinarian has any reason to believe that they may be exceeding the permissible residue limits, CFIA has indicated that they have the ability to have a sample of the birds tested as described in the Chapter 5.2 of the CFIA Meat Hygiene Manual of Procedures. However, after discussion at the meeting on November 6, this was found not to be a realistic approach given the number of farms that were in this situation.

It was also confirmed that going forward all new prescriptions will now use the 39-day RWT issued by CgFARAD.

For further information, please contact:

Jean Szkotnicki, President
Canadian Animal Health Institute
160 Research Lane, Suite 102
Guelph, ON
Tel 519.763.7777
Email cahi@cahi-icsa.ca

