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Symposium to Meet Identified Need for More Information Regarding Antibiotic Use in Food Animal Production

Colorado Springs, Colo. (October 18, 2011)—When consumers were asked in a nationwide survey to identify the Top 5 topics they want more information about related to where their food comes from, “how antibiotics are used” made their list. When farmers and ranchers were asked which Top 5 topics were most important to educate consumers about, they identified “the effect of pesticides, fertilizers and antibiotics in food.”

This survey undertaken in August by Ketchum Global Research Network and Braum Research on behalf of the U.S. Farmers & Ranchers Alliance underscores the importance of consumers, farmers and ranchers all having access to accurate, science-based information about antibiotics use in food animal production.

These individuals—plus anyone else wanting to increase their knowledge of antibiotic use in food animal production—are in luck, as a national symposium devoted to this precise topic is on tap for Oct. 26-27 in Chicago.

“Antibiotic Use in Food Animal Production: A Dialogue for a Common Purpose,” hosted by the National Institute for Animal Agriculture, will focus on four key areas:

- The use of antibiotics in food animal production
- Human health implications relative to antibiotic use
- Understanding and communicating the risks associated with *methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) in livestock
- Identifying additional research needs regarding how and to what extent antimicrobial resistance develops in humans and animals

“We’re going to look at antibiotic use in food animal production from all angles,” states Dr. Len Bull, chair of the symposium planning committee. “This is not a black-and-white issue. It’s one where we need to delve into the gray areas as well and see what science tells and shows us.

“While I realize that this topic can be quite polarized, I think we each can learn from the presenters and each other. The symposium is designed to be a dialogue, so symposium registrants can ask their burning questions and hear the answers from the experts.”

The symposium will take place at the Intercontinental Hotel, O’Hare, Chicago, Ill., beginning at 3:00 p.m. Oct. 26, and wrapping up at 3:00 p.m. Oct. 27. The symposium immediately follows the 2011 Food System Summit, Oct. 25-26, hosted by the Center for Food Integrity at the same venue.

Details of presentations and registration information for the symposium are available online at www.animalagriculture.org.

The National Institute for Animal Agriculture (NIAA) is a non-profit, membership-driven organization that unites and advances animal agriculture—the beef, dairy, equine, goat, poultry, sheep and swine industries. NIAA is dedicated to programs that work toward the eradication of diseases that pose risk to the health of animals, wildlife and humans; promote a safe and wholesome food supply for our nation and abroad; and promote best practices in environmental stewardship, animal health and animal well-being. Members of NIAA include livestock producers, producer organizations, veterinarians, scientists, state and federal officials, and agribusiness executives.

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