



AUSTRALIAN CHICKEN MEAT FEDERATION INC.

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### Media Statement

Thursday, 10 November 2005

### Antibiotics Policy of the Australian Chicken Meat Federation

The Australian Chicken Meat Federation today issued the following statement to counter any confusion that may have been caused by a recent media report on antibiotic use in the chicken meat industry which claimed that chicken meat is a major source of antibiotic resistant micro-organisms leading to human health concerns.

The chicken meat industry strongly rejects the claim that consumption of chicken meat is an important source of antibiotic resistant micro-organisms found in humans.

The Australian chicken meat industry's main goal is to produce healthy food. Chicken meat is healthy, nutritious and eating properly cooked chicken meat does not expose consumers to antibiotic resistant micro-organisms.

The use of antibiotics in meat chickens is limited to two important functions. First, antibiotics are used to treat bacterial infections in unwell birds. Second, they are also used to prevent well birds from becoming infected with bacteria or disease in the first instance.

While the media report suggests that chicken meat consumption may contribute to the acquisition of antibiotic resistant micro-organisms by humans, **in practice, all bacteria, are killed through normal preparation and cooking of chicken meat, including any that may be resistant to antibiotics.**

In addition, industry manages its use of antibiotics to prevent resistant bacteria from developing and avoids using antibiotics that are related to antibiotics used in human medicine.

#### ACMF Industry Code

- Only antibiotics that have been assessed for their safety and approved by the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority for use in meat chickens are to be used.
- Good veterinary practice, withholding periods, designed to ensure that there is no residue left in the meat at the time of processing, and all other conditions stipulated by the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority must be observed at all times.
- Antibiotics are not to be used to promote or enhance the birds' growth.
- Where unavoidable, antibiotics used in human medicine may be used, but only for targeted therapeutic treatment.

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**ENDS**

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