

Did you know that each year more antibiotics are fed to food-animals in North Carolina than are given to all Americans? Thanks to this kind of misuse, antibiotic-resistant diseases now kill more Americans than HIV/AIDS.

On March 9, 2011, Rep. Slaughter re-introduced [H.R. 965, The Preservation of Antibiotics for Medical Treatment Act \(PAMTA\)](#), which is designed to end the routine use of antibiotics on healthy animals and curb the growing threat of superbugs.

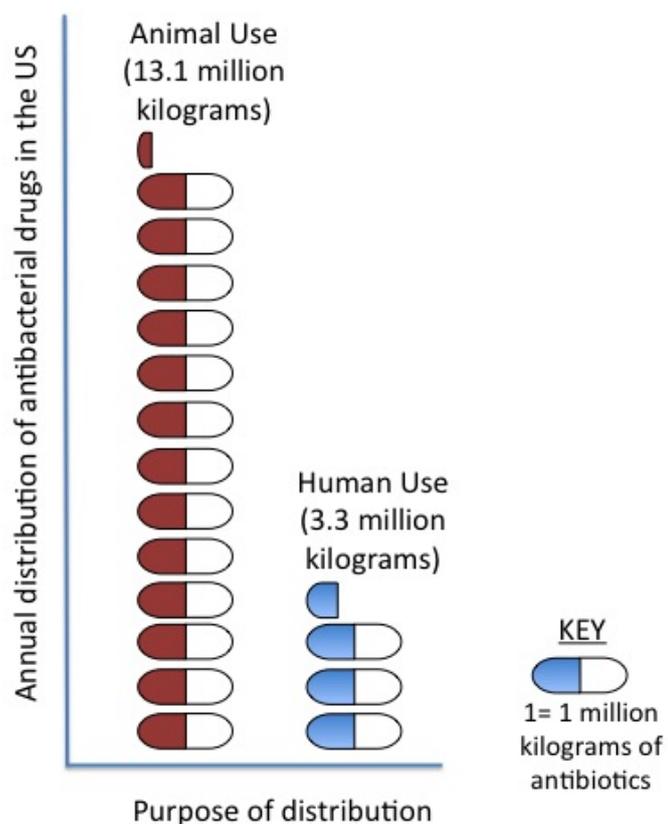
PAMTA would preserve the effectiveness of medically important antibiotics by phasing out the use of these drugs in healthy food-producing animals, while allowing their use for treatment of sick animals. The legislation also requires the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to apply the same tough standards to new applications for approval of animal antibiotics.

**Antibacterial Drug Use in the United States**

It was previously known that 13.1 million kilograms of antibacterial drugs were distributed in 2009 for use on animals.

Now Rep. Slaughter has confirmed with the US Food and Drug Administration that 3.3 million kilograms of antibacterial drugs were distributed in 2009 for human use.

That means that 80% of all antibacterial drugs in the United States are being distributed for use on animals, not to protect human health.



On February 23, 2011, Slaughter confirmed with the FDA an alarming statistic: [80 percent of all antibiotics used in the United States are used not on humans but on food-animals, most of which are perfectly healthy.](#)

This kind of habitual use of antibiotics has been conclusively linked to the growing risk of antimicrobial-resistant infections in humans. [A National Academy of Sciences report stated that](#) , "a decrease in antimicrobial use in human medicine alone will have little effect on the current situation. Substantial efforts must be made to decrease inappropriate overuse in animals and agriculture as well."

When our limited supply of antibiotics is used indiscriminately and without care, there are public health consequences. It is time to put a stop to big agribusinesses doling out pharmaceuticals to healthy animals just because it is better for their bottom line. Antibiotic use in food-animals must be limited to prevent the inadvertent creation of superbugs that are too powerful for our own medicine.

In addition to introducing legislation, Slaughter has called upon the FDA and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to take action to improve regulatory oversight, surveillance, and monitoring of food-animal production and antibiotic resistance. Last year, the Governmental Accounting Agency (GAO) released a report that Rep. Slaughter requested in 2009, which found that [federal agencies have made limited progress in combating the growing threat of antibiotic resistance.](#)

On March 11, 2011, Slaughter led a letter to Secretary Sebelius at the Department of Health and Human Services to urge the formation of a national plan to combat antibiotic resistance. Since that letter was written, a national plan to combat antibiotic resistance has been issued.



[To view Slaughter's letter, click here.](#)