



BUSINESS PLAN 2018

Introduction

1. RUMA is a unique, independent non-profit Alliance of organisations, representing all stages of the animal food chain from 'farm to fork', that have an interest in the stewardship of animal medicines in agriculture (see annex A for current RUMA membership and officers). Its work reflects the importance of traceability, transparency and accountability at all points in the chain: from primary food production, through processing, manufacturing and retailing to the final consumer. RUMA is committed to supporting a One Health strategy to address the risk of antimicrobial resistance.

How?

2. RUMA provides leadership on the responsible use of antibiotics and other medicines. Its work is helping to develop a UK livestock industry which is innovative and proactive in efforts to continually improve the responsibility with which medicines are being used while ensuring optimum animal welfare. It works to ensure confidence amongst government and the public that the industry is fully engaged on issues of responsible use and is 'doing things right'.
3. RUMA operates by providing best practice advice on the use of medicines to farmers and veterinary surgeons by publishing free guidelines aimed at each of these groups and providing advice/comment on specific issues on its website ruma.org.uk. RUMA guidelines highlight the importance of good farm management and health planning to reduce disease challenge and, therefore, the need to use medicines. RUMA does not support the use of medicines as a substitute for good farm management and animal husbandry.
4. RUMA's strategic objectives are to support vets, farmers and supply chains in:
 - a) Prevention of disease and illness – based on adoption of sound biosecurity, good feed and water, vaccination programmes, pen-side diagnostics and proactive, meaningful health planning.
 - b) Responsible use of antimicrobials in treatment of bacterial infections – based on updated and strengthened RUMA guidelines, including guidance on use of critically important antibiotics (CIAs) where this is a necessity.
 - c) Usage reduction – setting and working to achieve the species specific goals which also meet government targets and societal expectations.

- d) Monitoring and reporting – the comprehensive collection and publication of antibiotic usage data as well as surveillance and monitoring regimes.
- e) Creating a positive environment for progress – ensuring stakeholders understand what the industry is achieving and addressing challenges.

RUMA's 2018 Work Programme

- 5. It is important for RUMA to maintain a high profile amongst both farmers and vets, so that they can avail themselves of up to date, science-based advice on best practice use of medicines, and amongst policy makers (e.g. Defra/VMD and the Food Standards Agency), so that they are aware of this advice. This will be done by working to meet our Strategic Objectives.

5.1 Challenge and support the industry to use medicines responsibly, including reducing, refining and replacing current use of antimicrobials (Strategic Objectives a, b, c, d, e)

Support the continuing work and momentum of the Targets Task Force

- Monitor progress against the species target plans in agreement with the sectors and the VMD. The Targets Task Force will continue to meet biannually to consider progress and identify any obstacles to meeting the targets.
- Support the sectors in raising awareness of any obstacles and finding solutions, e.g. funding shortfalls, policy barriers, identifying need for technical innovation.
- Publish an update on progress towards meeting the sector targets November 2018

Maintain collaborative, pre-competitive progress through expert groups and government relations

- Work with members and RUMA's Independent Scientific Group to identify the R&D the industry needs to move forwards and raise priorities with regulators and government.
- Continue to liaise with stakeholders to ensure they understand progress and have opportunities to support pre-competitively.
- Provide visible leadership for the livestock industry's implementation of the UK Government's 5 year AMR Strategy published in 2013 by co-ordinating the work to deliver the actions in the RUMA Action Plan and reporting progress by publishing the final update of the Plan during 2018.
- Liaise with the Government as they draft a new 5 year AMR Strategy and develop a new action plan to help the livestock industry to implement the strategy.

5.2 Sustain activities and create a change in culture around accountability and responsible use (Strategic Objectives a, b, c, d)

Create a Responsible Use training toolkit

- Launch the output from the NOAH co-ordinated project to enable vets to provide standardised training on the responsible use of antibiotics and other medicines for their clients under the RUMA banner.

Promote/inspire uptake through continuing to build a 'can-do' approach

- Continue informing and promoting the widespread uptake of positive practices within the livestock farming and veterinary industries through the RUMA Communications Strategy.
- Provide up-to-date information on the responsible use of medicines to farmers, vets, consumers, policy makers and the farming/trade media.
- Regularly update the main RUMA website (www.ruma.org.uk) with position statements, factsheets and the key information users would expect of an organisation speaking for the industry.
- Further develop and update the farm antibiotics website (www.farmantibiotics.org) as a source of accurate, factual information on the prudent use of antibiotics in livestock production, including adding to the suite of case studies and examples of best practice for vets and farmers.
- Continue working with PHE to improve engagement with the 'Antibiotic Guardian' pledge within the farming sectors, for example through award entries.
- Engage with media and its audiences through programmed activity e.g. hot topic articles; news announcements; publicise case studies, films and infographs; thought leadership articles; social media (Twitter); reactive media management.

Ensure accurate information is available to explain the industry position on the use of medicines, and where necessary respond to misinformation

- Engage with MPs and the healthcare sector to steadily build mutual understanding of the livestock sector approach to responsible use.
- Keep building the online bank of public-facing AMR information resources on www.farmantibiotics.org to provide a source of evidence-based facts and figures for all.
- Improve reputation and search rankings for www.farmantibiotics.org and drive more traffic to the site through links and recommendations.
- Engage with stakeholders and critics.
- Proactively manage issues.

Sustain focus and pressure through a different campaign each year

Create an annual action campaign to drive awareness and achieve positive change, e.g. #ColostrumIsGold to improve colostrum use thereby reducing the need for antibiotics.

5.3 Increase the clarity and consistency of messages and information so key stakeholders and the public are clear about progress, issues and what is being done (Strategic Objectives d, e)

- Collate a bank of evidence based position statements and resources for both internal member and external stakeholder use to promote responsible use.
- Audit all existing resources to ensure they are up to date, accurate, adopt the right tone, cover the right topics, are in the right form and meet the needs of members and other stakeholders.
- Identify gaps and form plan to address these.
- Further develop 'evidence base (i.e. facts and examples) for key messages.
- Create platforms to host materials for both members (password protected) and wider industry/public use online.

5.4 Maintain a strong prioritisation on science and animal health (Strategic Objectives a, b, c, d, e)

Develop further RUMA's scientific capability with the dedicated Scientific Group

- Arrange for the Independent Scientific Group to meet as required and consult members on issues as they arise.
- Bolster the independent and credible reputation of the group through communications and transparency on the RUMA website.
- Consider expanding the role of the independent Scientific Group to include advice on AMR related R&D for the livestock sector.

Establish a programme for reviewing and updating responsible use guidelines for the livestock sectors on a rolling basis

- Agree a programme with the Independent Scientific Group and the Targets Task Force and implement it.

Budget

6. RUMA is financed primarily through fees paid by its members. These fees were increased in 2017 to help pay for RUMA's increased workload and will generate an annual income of some £90,000. These funds will be used to meet the costs of implementing the communications strategy (including maintaining the RUMA websites), drafting and issuing guidelines, holding meetings and general administration by the Secretary General.

ANNEX A

RUMA MEMBERS JANUARY 2018

RUMA values its diverse membership and recognises the shared interests in the areas of food safety, animal health and animal welfare amongst its member organisations. There are two categories of membership, Category A members make up the RUMA board, and Category B members join the Category A members on the Alliance. The RUMA Board is happy to consider membership requests throughout the subscription year.

Current Category A RUMA members are:

AHDB Dairy / Beef & Lamb

AHDB Pork

Agricultural Industries Confederation (AIC)

Animal Medicines Training Regulatory Authority (AMTRA)

Assured Food Standards

British Egg Industry Council

British Meat Processors Association

British Poultry Council

British Retail Consortium

British Veterinary Association

Dairy UK

NFU

National Pig Association

NOAH

Category B RUMA Members

Animal Health Distributors Association

British Trout Association

City and Guilds

Game Farmers Association

National Sheep Association

NFU Scotland

Royal Association of British Dairy Farmers

RSPCA

Scottish Salmon Producers Association

Ulster Farmers Union

RUMA Officers

Chairman	Gwyn Jones
Vice Chairman	Cat McLaughlin
Treasurer	Tim Brigstocke
Secretary General	Chris Lloyd
Targets Task Force Group Chair	Gwyn Jones
Independent Scientific Group Chair	Cat McLaughlin

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