



MINISTRY FOR AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES,
FOOD AND ANIMAL RIGHTS

Animal Health and Welfare Department

National Veterinary Laboratory
Abattoir Street, Alberttown, Marsa, MRS 1123 - Malta

Circular Ref: VMS-AHWD Ref: 01/2021

11th February 2021

To:

All Veterinary Wholesalers and Veterinary Pharmacies

All Veterinary Surgeons and all Medicated Feed traders

Pig Breeders' Cooperative Society Ltd.

Re. Veterinary Medicinal Products containing “zinc oxide” to be administered orally to food producing species.

On the 26-06-2017 the EU Commission issued an Implementing Decision concerning the marketing authorisations for veterinary medicinal products containing “zinc oxide” to be administered orally to food producing species.

In the framework of Article 35 of Directive 2001/82/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council EU Commission decided that Member States shall withdraw existing national marketing authorisations for the veterinary medicinal products containing Zinc Oxide.

It was scientifically concluded that zinc oxide’s benefits of preventing diarrhea do not outweigh the risks to the environment and development of antimicrobial resistance.

In the same decision it was indicated that a Member State may defer the withdrawal of the marketing authorisations for the veterinary medicinal products if it considers that the immediate withdrawal of the marketing authorisations may have adverse impact in its territory given the lack of availability of alternatives and the change required in pig farming practices. The period of the deferral shall not exceed five years from the date of the adoption of this Decision.

Malta has deferred the withdrawal of the marketing authorisations until 26-06-2022. Concerned parties are therefore advised to develop alternatives that are available and affordable and change pig farming practices without increasing the use of antimicrobials.

Pigs require zinc to maintain various metabolic functions, hence it is included in their diet as a feed additive. This use has not been banned as Zinc oxide is still included in the register of feed additives, which applies to the whole EU. The maximum dosage as feed additive is 150ppm as opposed to 2500ppm when it is used in veterinary medicinal products.

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NVL-AHWD