



# Antibiotic Resistance and Other Complicated Topics: Gaining the Trust of your Audience

Russ Daly, DVM, MS,  
DACVPM (Epidemiology)

Extension Veterinarian  
State Public Health  
Veterinarian



**SOUTH DAKOTA  
STATE UNIVERSITY**  
*College of Agriculture, Food  
and Environmental Sciences*

# Bottom Line Up Front

- Trust is critical when communicating complex (and contentious) issues
- Veterinarians enjoy a high level of trust with clients and the public
- Extension veterinarians are important sources of unbiased information for practitioners and the public



# **PACCARB Scenario: Antimicrobial aspects of concurrent human and animal pandemics**

- Rapidly evolving situation
- Information voids lead to confusion and mistrust
- Governmental authorities and experts = early information sources
- Public good vs. private/individual needs



# Producer/Animal Owners: Individual Concerns

The pigs look like they're in pain

I don't have enough help to treat all these pigs

What if my farm goes under? What will Dad think?

The banker isn't going to like this

Do my neighbors think I'm a bad farmer?

What if there aren't any antibiotics that work?

I hope I don't bring a germ to my wife and kids

I've got a crop to get in the ground

Do my actions affect others?

Maybe I should find a vet that will give me the "good stuff"

What if I get sick from this?



# The herd veterinarian: Trusted source of information

- Trust comes from:
  - Understanding the operator and his/her goals
  - Understanding the operator's (and farm's) abilities and limitations
  - Respect for privacy and professionalism
  - Living and working in the same environment, community
  - Veterinarian's experience with similar farms
  - Veterinarian's education in population medicine concepts

Table 1

Likelihood to Use an Information Source for *E. coli* Control Information

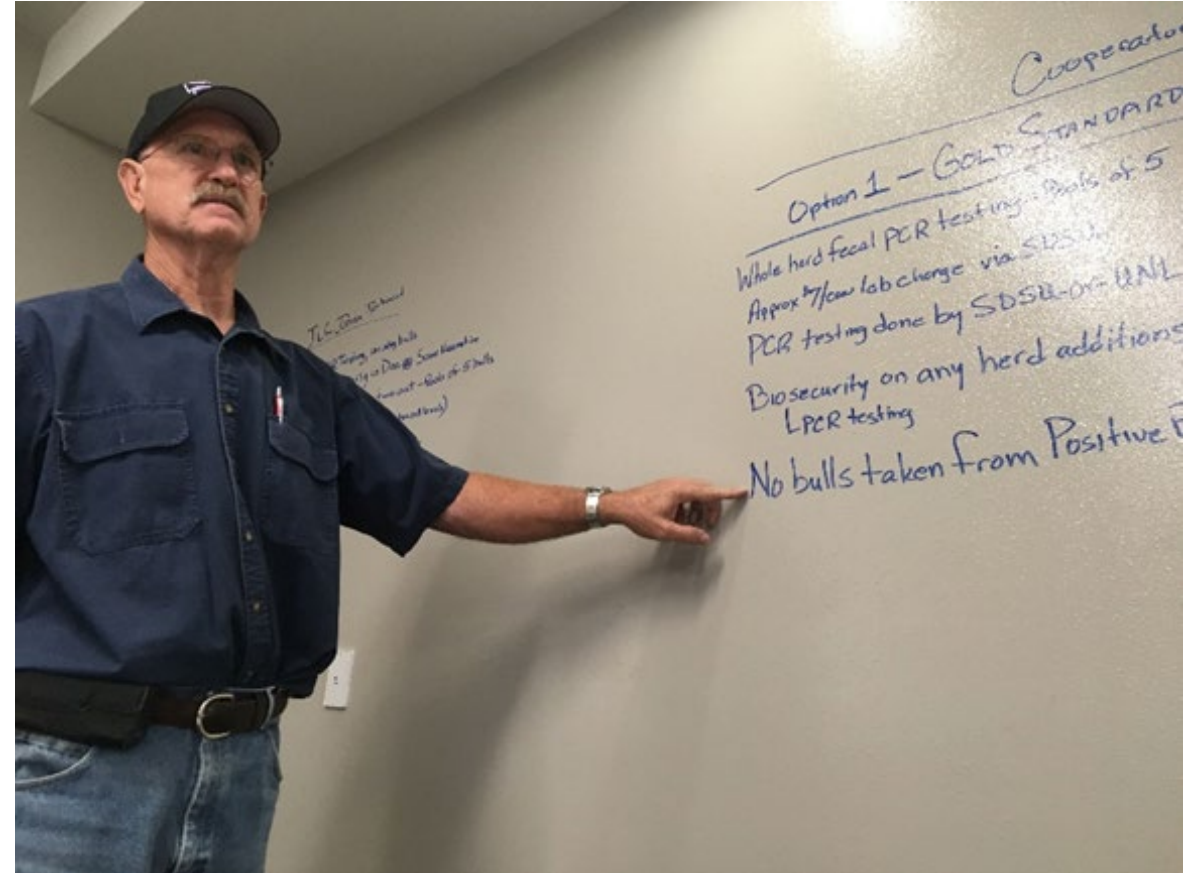
<u>Information Source</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>Standard Deviation</u>
State and Local Extension Personnel	3.29	1.37
Veterinarian	4.17*	1.00
Government Sources	2.88**	1.24
Other Cattle Producers	3.42	1.60
Beef Industry Organization	3.17	1.21

Note: N = 112. Sources ranked on a five-point semantic differential scale (Unlikely/Likely). \*Significantly different from other sources at the  $p < .001$  level. \*\*Significantly different from other sources, except beef industry organizations,  $p < .05$ .

Chapes, J. (2016). Credibility and Likelihood to Use Information Sources by Cattle Producers For Learning *E. coli* Control Strategies. *Online Journal of Rural Research & Policy* 11:4

# But where do vets get their information?

- “Unbiased” sources are important
- Universities: Research, Extension, Veterinary Diagnostic Labs
- Veterinary organizations: State VMA's, AVMA, species-specific groups (AABP, AASV)
- Federal and state animal (and human) health governmental agencies
- Animal health companies



# Extension Veterinarians

- DVM's employed by university Extension services
- Practice experience
- Advanced degrees, board certification
- Animal health issues
- Public health, zoonotic diseases, One Health



AMERICAN ASSOCIATION  
OF EXTENSION VETERINARIANS



# Extension Veterinarians

- Outreach to veterinarians, livestock producers, and animal owners
  - **And the general public!**
- Communicate & explain university research
- Translate complicated concepts regarding animal and human health
- Maintain connections to:
  - State and local producer groups
  - Veterinary professional groups
  - Animal and public health agencies
  - Veterinary colleges, veterinary science departments, veterinary diagnostic labs
- **Relationships!!**





# Communication methods

- Group presentations
- Farm visits – disease investigations
- Articles in professional and producer publications
- One on one consultations with vets and producers
- Media: Ag radio, television
- Social media
- University and Extension websites
- Annual Symposium: Applied Animal and Human Health Research and Extension Symposium
- Can leverage communication infrastructure from university Extension services



# Example: Veterinary Feed Directive, 2017

- Confusion over new rules
- Confusion over existing rules
- Contention from producers
- Contention from veterinarians
- Privacy and data concerns
- **Extension veterinarians were at the forefront for educating producers and veterinarians on the new rules**



# Summary

- Veterinarians are among the most trusted professionals for livestock producers and animal owners
- Extension – and Extension Veterinarians are essential sources of unbiased information for veterinary practitioners and animal caretakers
- Trust underpins all effective messaging
- Relationships matter



# Russ Daly, DVM, MS, DACVPM (Epidemiology)

*Extension Veterinarian/Professor  
State Public Health Veterinarian*

[russell.daly@sdstate.edu](mailto:russell.daly@sdstate.edu)

## **Veterinary and Biomedical Sciences**

SAR 1119, Box 2175  
Brookings, SD 57007

**O:** (605) 688-6589

**M:** (605) 690-5306

