



Antibiotic Use in Dairy Sector

Why in News

Recently, the **Centre for Science and Environment** (CSE) held an online meeting on **antibiotic use in the dairy sector**.

- The meeting was attended by experts from the [Food Safety and Standards Authority of India](#) (FSSAI), the [National Dairy Development Board](#) (NDDB), the [World Health Organization](#) (WHO), the **Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying** (under the Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying), the [Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation](#), (CDSCO) etc.
- The meeting highlighted that the **milk** sold directly to consumers and the processed **milk** sold in packets are **not tested** and stay largely **unchecked for antibiotic residues**.

Key Points

- India is the **world's largest milk producer**, and it also forms an **integral part of Indian diets**, especially of children's.
 - It produced **188 million tonnes** (MT) of milk in **2018-19**.
 - **Urban areas consume 52%** of it and the unorganised sector, comprising milkmen and contractors, caters to 60% of this consumer base.
 - The remaining demand is met by dairy cooperatives and private dairies which represent the organised sector.
- **Concerns:**
 - **Inadequate Focus on Testing:** There is an inadequate focus on testing for antibiotic residues in the milk collected by State federations, which process it and sell it as packaged milk.
 - **Extensive Misuse:** Antibiotics are extensively misused in the dairy sector. Such **chemical-intensive food leads to [antibiotic resistance](#)**.
 - **No Professional Help:** Farmers often **inject animals on their own judgment** of signs and symptoms of a disease without any veterinary supervision.
 - **Indiscriminate Usage:** Dairy farmers indiscriminately use antibiotics for diseases such as **mastitis** (infection/inflammation of the udder) **which is a common ailment** in dairy animals.
 - The antibiotics used by them often include **Critically Important Antibiotics** (CIAs) for humans.
 - The WHO has warned that the CIAs should be preserved in view of the growing crisis of antibiotic resistance.
 - Farmers often **sell milk while the animal is under treatment**, which increases the chances of antibiotic residues.
 - **Easy Availability:** The antibiotics are easily available without the prescription of a registered veterinarian and stocked at farms.

[Source: TH](#)

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