

# IDENTIFYING CRITICAL POINTS FOR ACTION TO FURTHER REDUCE ANTIMICROBIAL USE IN LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION

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In livestock production (LP), antimicrobials are also used to mitigate risks and sometimes to compensate for a poor animal health management. Although a substantial decrease in antimicrobial use (AMU) has been achieved in Belgium (-40%), the government-set target has not been met and the cumulative reduction has stagnated. In order to identify critical points for action to further reduce AMU, we mapped the underlying reasons for the latter with relevant stakeholders in the pork and veal calf sectors, which represent a significant share of the usage in Belgian LP.



**72%**  
TOTAL CONSUMPTION IN CALVES, PIGS & POULTRY IN BE

**6,5**  
BD<sub>100</sub>-SPECIES (PERCENTAGE OF DAYS ANIMALS ARE TREATED)

**11,5%**  
TOTAL CONSUMPTION IN CALVES, PIGS & POULTRY IN BE

**22,7**  
BD<sub>100</sub>-SPECIES (PERCENTAGE OF DAYS ANIMALS ARE TREATED)

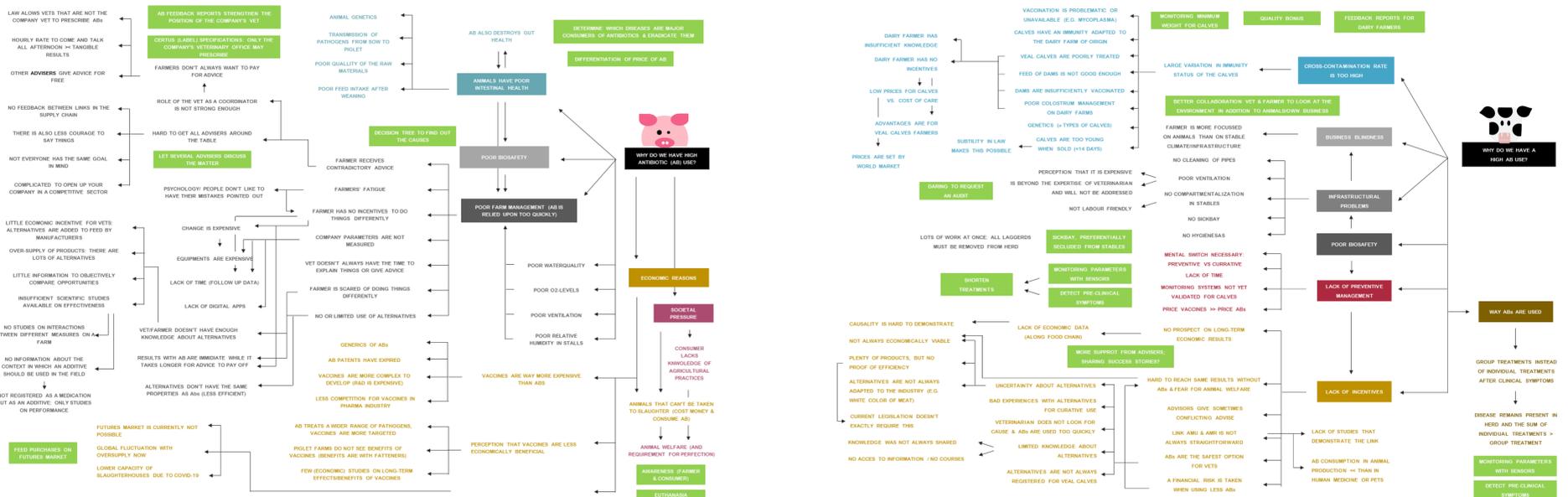
## METHODS

First, stakeholders who can influence animal health in the pork and veal sectors were identified and invited to participate in an introductory meeting. Of the 80 stakeholders identified, 44 attended the meeting and were introduced to the project. Subsequently, 4 1,5 hour online sessions were organized for each sector to draw a problem tree specific to that sector. To do this, participants (ca. 18 per session) were asked about the reasons for antimicrobial use. Answers were further questioned until the “root causes” for a specific issue were unraveled and no new information was provided by the participants. In a fifth session, the results were presented publicly and feedback was received, mainly from stakeholders who had participated in the introductory meeting, but who had decided not to take part in the other sessions.

TYPE	ORGANISATION	CALVES	PORK
Industry	Pharmaceutical companies	✓	✓
	Animal feed companies	✓	✓
	Veterinarians	✓	✓
	Integrators	✓	✓
	Retail	✓	✓
Government	Federal Agency for Health Products	✓	✓
	Federal Agency for the Safety of the Food Chain	✓	✓
	Flemish agriculture & fisheries department	✓	✓
NPO	Labels	✓	✓
	BE knowledge center for AMR/AMU	✓	✓
	BE Feed association	✓	✓
	BE meat federation	✓	✓
Farmers' organisations / syndicates		✓	✓



## RESULTS: PROBLEM TREES



## CONCLUSION

The participation of many stakeholders allowed for a better understanding of the underlying reasons for antimicrobial use in Belgian pig and veal production systems, as well as the identification of barriers that may impede the transition to a more sustainable AMU. This approach also allowed for a better understanding of what actions stakeholders would consider feasible and acceptable to further reduce antimicrobial use and also allowed for improved information exchange between different stakeholders.

