Antibiotic resistance
Antibiotic resistance is a consequence of antibiotic use. Bacteria adapt to the threat of antibiotics using mechanisms to overcome the drug. These bacteria which we call resistant bacteria, then survive. The more antibiotics we use, the more we generate resistant bacteria. The antibiotics become less effective the more we use them and eventually have no effect at all. Until recently we have always been provided with new antibiotics by pharmaceutical companies when the current ones have stopped working. This is no longer happening as research has stalled and the development of new drugs is not keeping pace. The last antibiotic with specific mechanism was in fact discovered in 1987.

Threat to healthcare worldwide
Antibiotic resistance is one of the greatest threats to healthcare worldwide. Simple infections that have been easily treated since antibiotics were invented some 70 years ago are increasingly becoming fatal. The progress in public health during the last 200 years is at stake. Antibiotic resistance is annually causing the death of at least 25,000 Europeans and for the USA the figure is 23,000 people. It is not only a human tragedy but also a significant burden on healthcare systems and the economy. These figures will only increase and the challenge will become unsurmountable if nothing is done now. Recent estimates indicate that uncontrolled the global figure could be as high as 10 million premature deaths annually by 2050.

“One Health”
The concept “One Health” recognises the relationship between disease and health in humans and animals, and the environment in which we are operating. There is a need for interdisciplinary co-operation between human medicine, veterinary medicine and ecology to fight disease and improve health. In many countries the use of antibiotics in the animal sector accounts for up to 80% of the total consumption. This is due to the search for a quick fix and the pressure for mass production in the animal sector where proper rearing systems are replaced with antibiotics. Heavy marketing and financial incentives for pharmacist and prescribers are also contributing to the misuse and overuse of antibiotics, both in humans and animals. Wiser use of antibiotics can be achieved through legislation, information and the right incentives.

Nordic Experiences can be useful
In the Nordic countries, there is a long tradition of cross-sector co-operation, e.g. in the farm-to-table principle, and a holistic approach to environmental conditions. In addition, there is broad support and collaboration between industry and the authorities, since the industry generally has a major responsibility for implementing the necessary controls.

The EU Parliament can make a difference
Currently the legislation is insufficient and proposals for new legislation are being debated. The new legislation will have a great impact of the effort to stop antibacterial resistance in Europe in the years to come. The European Parliament should make use of this opportunity for the benefit of 500 million Europeans, and set a good example for other regions of the world.

“ONE HEALTH FROM A NORDIC PERSPECTIVE”

Seminar in the European Parliament, room ASP 1E1
22 April 2015, 12:30-14:00
Light sandwich lunch will be served in front of the room from 12.00.

PROGRAMME

Christel Schaldemose, Member of the European Parliament, Denmark
How can the European Parliament contribute to the solution?

Annette Cleveland Nielsen, Danish Veterinary and Food Administration,
How can we minimise the use of antibiotics in animal husbandry?
Experiences from Denmark.

Nina Svendsby, Animalia, Norway
A responsible industry is the key to success.
Experiences from Norway.

Lotta Berg, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences
Improved animal welfare leads the way to healthier people.
Experiences from Sweden.

Annicka Engblom, Member of the Nordic Council, MP Sweden
The Nordic model of “One Health” in an international perspective.

For registration contact: Bente Øxseth at the Nordic Council,
e-mail box@norden.org. Registration ends Friday 17 April.

The seminar is arranged by the Nordic Council, the parliamentary assembly of the Nordic countries, and Christel Schaldemose, Member of the European Parliament.

Christel Schaldemose is a member of the European Parliament since 2006 elected in Denmark. She is member of the Internal Market and Consumer Protection Committee (IMCO) and a substitute member of the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety Committee (ENVI). Before being elected to the Parliament she was the Secretary General for Danish Adult Education Association. In her political work Schaldemose has focused on efforts to protect public health through consumer safety policies as well as food policies. This includes efforts to curb antibacterial resistance and the elimination of endocrine’s disturbance in consumer goods through European legislation.

Annicka Engblom is chairman for the Citizens’ and Consumer Rights Committee of the Nordic Council. Ms Engblom is also a member of the Swedish Parliament and at present member of the Committee on Constitution. Over the past couple of years, the Committee has focused its agenda on health and welfare concerns and highlighted the fast growing problem with antibiotic resistance.

Christina Gestrin is a Member of Finnish Parliament since 2008 to 2011. Gestrin is a member of The Royal Swedish Academy of Agriculture and Forestry and has a long and broad experience of issues relating to the primary industries and the environment. Gestrin has been the Chair of a regional union for Professional Fishers in Uusimaa, Finland for eleven years. She has previously worked for the Norwegian Dairy Cooperative (Tine) and in the Norwegian Food Safety Authority, at the Border Inspection Post of Oslo Airport. The last couple of years she has participated in the Norwegian livestock industry’s efforts in policy development, surveillance strategy and competence building to understand and control antibiotic resistance in the livestock production.

Nina Svendsby is a veterinarian and head of section in the Norwegian Meat and Poultry Research Centre (Animalia). Her field of responsibility is animal health, animal welfare and biosecurity. She also holds a Master of Management degree from the Norwegian Business School. Her main interests are preventive veterinary medicine, disease control and risk management. She has previously worked for the Norwegian Dairy Cooperative (Tine) and in the Norwegian Food Safety Authority, at the Border Inspection Post of Oslo Airport. The last couple of years she has participated in the Norwegian livestock industry’s efforts in policy development, surveillance strategy and competence building to understand and control antibiotic resistance in the livestock production.

Lotta Berg is a veterinarian and a senior lecturer in animal welfare at the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences. Her main interest is how farm animal housing and management influences animal health and behaviour. This includes the interface between disease prevention, biosecurity and animal welfare. Lotta has previously been involved in developing animal welfare legislation nationally and at the EU level, and is currently the chairperson of the One Health Sweden network, which aims at bringing together researchers and practitioners from human medicine, veterinary medicine, ecology, microbiology and so on, acknowledging the fact that humans and other animals share many diseases, both contagious and others. This also includes the growing problems with antibiotic resistance, which is an increasing threat to both human and animal health and welfare.