

Press Release 15 November 2022

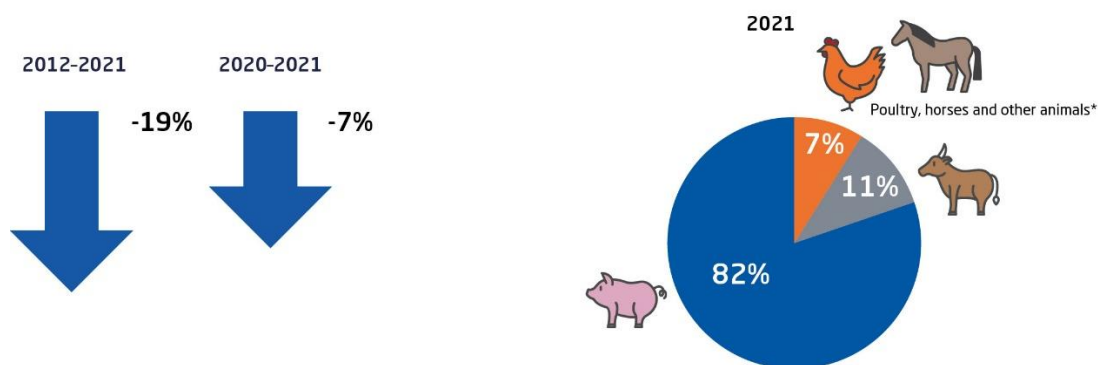
## The consumption of antibiotics in animal production continues to fall

**The reduction in antibiotic consumption in animals was particularly marked in 2021. Partly because of the two tonnes that are no longer used for mink, and partly because antibiotic consumption in pigs, poultry and fish was lower than in the previous year. This are some of the findings in this year's DANMAP report from Statens Serum Institut and the National Food Institute, Technical University of Denmark.**

In 2021, the total antimicrobial consumption in animals was approx. 88 tons of active substance. This is shown in figures from the new VetStat database, which the Danish Veterinary and Food Administration launched in June 2021. In the new database, the amount of antibiotics is calculated in a slightly different way than before.

"It has affected the calculation of the amount of antibiotics, but not the overall trends and conclusions", says research group leader Marianne Sandberg, DTU Food Institute.

Calculated in kg. of active substance, the antimicrobial consumption in animals has decreased every year since 2013, except in 2020. The total consumption was 19% (-21,321 kg.) lower in 2021 compared to 2012, and 7% (-6,967 kg.) lower than in 2020. A significant part of the reduction can be explained by a lower consumption in pigs as well as a markedly lower consumption in poultry and an almost zero consumption in fur animals as a result of the culling of all Danish mink.



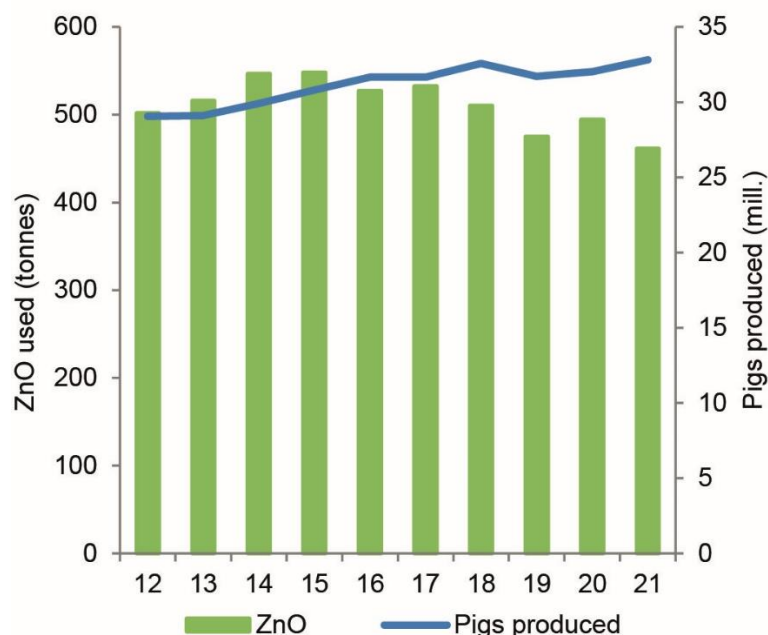
## The pig industry did not reach reduction targets

In 2021, Danish pig production accounted for 82% of the total veterinary consumption of antibiotics. From 2020 to 2021, consumption measured in kilograms has decreased by 3%. If instead it is calculated in terms of the frequency with which animals receive antibiotic treatment, consumption in 2021 roughly corresponds to the previous year, but has decreased when analyzed over a longer period.

The Danish Veterinary and Food Administration's latest action plan for antibiotic resistance in production animals and in food has as its goal that the antibiotic consumption in pigs, measured in kilos, must be reduced by 2% per year from 2019 to 2022 compared to the consumption in 2018. However, the goal of the action plan has not been reached in 2021, despite the measured decrease.

"It is positive that the antibiotic consumption in pig production seems to be falling again, but it will be difficult for pig producers to reach the reduction target of the action plan of a total of 8% reduction from 2019-2022." says Marianne Sandberg.

In 2021, the consumption of medical zinc oxide fell 7% compared to 2020. The substance is used to manage diarrhea in piglets, but zinc oxide can lead to resistance in bacteria in pigs, such as MRSA. Most of the substance also ends up on the fields via the manure and can thus become the source of an environmental problem. Therefore, the EU Commission has decided that sales of the substance must cease by June 2022 at the latest. In 2021, more than 461 tonnes of medicinal zinc oxide were still used for pigs.



"Although the consumption of medicinal zinc oxide has decreased, it appears that the pig producers continued the practice of using it for the piglets right up until the end of June 2022. We will, of course, look closely at what happens to the consumption in the last six months of 2022," Marianne Sandberg says.

### Antibiotic consumption for poultry halved

Antibiotic use in poultry was at its lowest level (1,196 kg) in more than a decade and was less than half of the amount used in 2020. The decrease was mainly driven by lower use in broilers and in turkeys, of mainly tetracyclines, which are a type of antibiotics typically used to treat respiratory diseases in poultry.

### Read more

Since 1995, the DANMAP program has monitored the human and veterinary use of antibiotics in Denmark, and the occurrence of antibiotic resistance among bacteria from animals, humans, and food. [Download the DANMAP report from DANMAP's website](#). Also on the website is a [fact sheet on antibiotic resistance](#).

Read about the development in human antibiotic consumption in a press release on the DANMAP website: [Danes' consumption of antibiotics continues to fall](#).

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