

# **AHI** ANIMAL HEALTH INSTITUTE

## Principles of Good Practice for Advertising and Promotion of Animal Health Products

*A Voluntary Guideline Developed by the Animal Health Institute*





The Animal Health Institute is the U.S. trade association representing manufacturers of animal health products – the pharmaceuticals, vaccines and feed additives used in modern food production, and the medicines that keep pets healthy. The animal health products market is diverse, complex, and unique. It is one of the most heavily regulated markets in the United States with products that may be regulated by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) or the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Some products may be sold only with a veterinarian’s prescription or order; some are available over-the-counter (OTC), while others may be used only under a veterinary feed directive (VFD); and others are utilized only in official government disease control or eradication programs. For more than 70 years, AHI has worked with research-based companies to develop unified positions on industry issues.

### *Principles of Good Practice for Advertising and Promoting Animal Health Products*

The Animal Health Institute and its member companies are committed to providing the public with products that help improve the lives of animals and help keep animal-derived food safe for consumption while striving to protect the environment. The Animal Health Institute members understand the importance of providing people who use animal health products with information that is accurate, fair, complete, clear, and meaningful. The Animal Health Institute has adopted principles of Good Practice for the Advertising and Promotion of Animal Health Products. All members are strongly encouraged to voluntarily observe these principles. The Animal Health Institute also encourages non-members to do likewise. These Principles are not intended and may not be used to restrict competition.

### *Guiding Principles*

Mindful of the trust the public has placed in the animal health products industry, members of the Animal Health Institute undertake:

1. To base product claims on valid scientific evidence that helps veterinarians, producers and others to select the appropriate product to treat a specific condition.

2. To provide scientifically valid information about product indications, contraindications, withdrawal times and toxicity clearly, objectively, and accurately, as well as providing truthful, balanced, and scientific information that is in response to specific veterinarian requests related to off-label indications in accordance with Food and Drug Administration guidelines.



3. To deal with public health officials, animal health professionals and the public with complete candor.

4. To ensure that all of its advertising and/or promotional materials are consistent with the product's label and comply with applicable state and federal laws, rules and regulations.

5. To report adverse events and product complaints to the regulatory authorities in accordance with applicable regulations.

6. To comply with applicable state and federal law regarding animal health products, including the regulations and policies issued by the Food and Drug

Administration, the Department of Agriculture, the Environmental Protection Agency, and all other federal and state government agencies.

7. To abide by the principle that promotional and marketing information about animal health products should be presented in a form and by ways and means which conform not only to legal requirements but also to ethical standards and principles of good taste.

### *Advertising and/or Promotional Guidelines*

Members of the Animal Health Institute agree to follow the guidelines below.

Advertisements and/or promotional materials, including websites and digital media, shall promote and depict the use of the product only as permitted by applicable laws and regulations. Promotion of the usefulness of an animal health product shall be based on evaluating all scientifically valid evidence and reflect this evidence accurately and clearly.

Comparisons of products, including competitive comparative claims, shall be substantiated with adequate and statistically valid data.

All claims, including comparative claims, in advertising and promotional materials, shall be truthful and not deceptive or misleading.

Sales representatives of an animal health company shall be adequately trained and possess sufficient medical, veterinary, technical and/or professional knowledge to present information on their company's products in an accurate and responsible manner.

### *Ethical Customer Relationships*

Animal health products are purchased by a wide array of customers, each with unique needs and expectations of the suppliers of those products. Our customers include pet owners, food animal producers, veterinarians, pharmacies, retailers, feed mills, distributors, and government agencies. Each of these customers demands and deserves professional interactions from the suppliers of animal health products. Animal health companies are an essential source of information about the usage, safety, and efficacy of their respective products, and they help set realistic expectations about their respective product offerings and how those products may address the needs of customers. In order to ensure professional interactions with customers, members of the Animal Health Institute will use only ethical business practices, optimize the legitimate business interests of both parties to engender trust and seek to ensure that the selection of a product is based on appropriate medical or nutritional rationale.



The provision of any hospitality, entertainment, or promotional items shall be reasonable and proportional to the situation, at all times keeping in mind the need to protect the good reputation of the animal health products industry. Promotional items should not be given to inappropriately reward prescribing or dispensing behavior for specific

products. These provisions do not address or preclude standard, legal and ethical business practices involving discounts, rebates, free goods or other business incentives.

### *Resolving Disputes Regarding Advertising and/or Promotional Materials*

Any Animal Health Institute member company that considers itself aggrieved by the conduct of another company regarding advertising and/or promotional materials shall first approach the other company with its concerns with the intent of resolving the dispute voluntarily and expeditiously, unless a matter cannot be addressed adequately except through judicial intervention. In keeping with the objectives of the Animal Health Institute, members should consider alternative dispute resolution mechanisms, as well as other avenues of relief, before referring a matter to a government agency or initiating legal action.

### *Observance of the Principles*

The Board of Directors of the Animal Health Institute – representing senior management from all member companies – agrees to support their respective companies’ voluntary compliance with these principles.

### *Authorization*

These Principles of Good Practice for the Advertising and Promotion of Animal Health Products were first adopted by the Animal Health Institute Board of Directors on February 6, 1996, with revisions made on April 15, 2000, April 30, 2009, April 19, 2016, and January 23, 2019.



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