

**Interview questions for Lynn Kavanagh, Farming Campaign Manager, World Animal Protection Canada, to be recorded at 1pm EST (10am PST) on Thursday, July 8th, (and to be broadcasted on Friday, July 16th, 2021)**

**Skype:** lkavanxxxxx

**Back-up (cell phone number):** 1- 416-893-xxxx

Alison's Skype name is alisoncole75 and cell number is 604-842-4663 (just in case needed).

*Intro:*

For our feature interview today, we have Lynn Kavanagh on the show. She is the Farming Campaign Manager of the non-profit organization World Animal Protection Canada.

World Animal Protection's mission is to end the needless suffering of animals by influencing decision-makers to put animals on the global agenda, and by inspiring people to change animals' lives for the better.

Just recently, World Animal Protection has released a 40 page report entitled "Silent super bug killers in a river near you". This report speaks on how factory farms contaminate water courses on 3 continents, and has discovered that public waterways next to industrial farms in Manitoba, and around the world, contain antibiotic resistance genes that are dangerous to public health. In today's interview, Lynn will share some of the details of this report, and explain the ongoing danger of antibiotic resistance in our country and beyond.

Hello Lynn, and welcome to the Animal Voices show!

Q1: Thank you for coming on the show today to discuss with us a topic that is of ongoing concern in Canada and worldwide - that is, the subject of standardized antibiotic use in factory farms on animals, and the dangers that this practise presents to public health. Can you start by explaining to our listeners, for those who don't know, how antibiotics work, and what happens when we over use them?

- what are ARGs?

- Antibiotic Resistance Genes (ARGs) which are driving antimicrobial resistance – the world's superbug crisis – projected to kill up to 10 million people annually by 2050

Q2: Can you speak about the research that was done in 2020 in 4 countries over 3 continents that resulted in World Animal Protection's report on "silent super bug killers"? What locations were examined, and what evidence was collected and analyzed?

- The report found that industrial farms could be discharging superbugs into the wider environment as a result of pig waste being spread on fields and leeching into groundwater and public waterways.

*by 6 mins in:*

Q3: Can you please elaborate on the findings in our Canadian province of Manitoba, which runs more pig factory farms than anywhere else in Canada? And tell us about the conditions that are created in factory farms that is what actually leads to the making of Antibiotic Resistance Genes?

- In Manitoba, the presence of ARGs was evaluated from samples collected in November 2020 from publicly accessible spaces upstream and downstream of eight industrial pig farms. The investigation found ARGs resistant to antibiotics included cephalosporins and fluoroquinolones, which are of most concern to the World Health Organization (WHO). These antibiotics are the last line of defence for common infections like urinary tract infections or to keep patients alive with life threatening conditions like respiratory infections, when other antibiotics fail.
- in Canada, around 80% of antibiotics are administered to pigs in their feed?!
- On industrial farms, mother pigs are often stuck in cages their entire lives, their piglets suffer from painful procedures such as tail cutting and the animals are forced to spend their lives in overcrowded, unsanitary conditions on concrete floors, with no enrichment. This can cause stress and sickness, so routine antibiotics are used on the animals for disease prevention. Also, to promote growth.

Q4: I read in the report that up to 70% of antibiotics administered to farmed animals are not absorbed, so this is how the super bugs leach into our environmental water ways, and even the air space near factory farms. Can you speak more about this, and the affect that this leakage has on the surrounding communities?

- Once in the environment, superbugs can reach humans in multiple ways. This includes through recreation such as water sports, eating fish from contaminated water and eating of crops contaminated with surface water.

*by 13 mins in:*

Q5: As the report tells us, " The routine overuse of antibiotics in animal agriculture is recognized by the World Health Organization and the United Nations as a significant contributor to the emergence of superbugs. Up to 10 million people are expected to die from superbugs each year by 2050 if action isn't taken to stop their overuse. Also, 700,000 people a year are already dying from infections that cannot be treated with antibiotics. World Health Organisation chief Tedros Ghebreyesus has warned that the superbug crisis is just as dangerous as the pandemic.

The European Union is actually banning the administering of antibiotics across groups of farmed animals to prevent disease by January 2022. Should Canada be the next country to instate such a ban? And where does Canada currently stand on this issue?

- The United Nations is calling for an end to unsustainable agricultural practices and acknowledges that intensive farming carries high risk of disease outbreaks and fallout for public and environmental health. It recognises that antibiotics are used to mask poor conditions for farm animals, and calls for investment in sustainable, agroecological food systems.

*by 16 mins in:*

(if time):

Q6: As the report also says, there is no international standard describing the concentration at which superbugs in the environment become dangerous to people. So, consequently, no one is held responsible, and farm discharge of antibiotics and superbugs into waterways are unmonitored. How can we make our governments accountable on this issue to the health of their citizens?

Q7: Finally, what is World Animal Protection's call to action, and what can our listeners and Canadians do to help end the growth of antibiotic resistance?

*Outro:*

Thank you very much, Lynn Kavanagh, Farming Campaign Manager of the non-profit World Animal Protection, for coming on the show to explain your organization's findings on super bugs in our water way systems from factory farms.

If you would like to read the report yourself, you can find it posted on our Facebook page: Animal Voices Vancouver, as well as on our website at [animalvoices.org](http://animalvoices.org), in the post for today's show.

Also, visit [WorldAnimalProtection.ca](http://WorldAnimalProtection.ca) to find out more about this organization's work and how it has been serving to protect animals for 50 years.

Thank you once again, Lynn, for the information, and have a great weekend!