

Examples of activities staged by actors (summary of the blog on www.star.admin.ch)

Distribution of information material by the Department of Infectious Diseases of the Ticino Cantonal Hospitals, Lugano (whole week)

To ensure antibiotics are administered properly, the department was giving out information brochures to public hospitals, private clinics and doctor's surgeries throughout the canton of Ticino. This year, the Cantonal Medical Office and EOC in Lugano have been financing the production and distribution of brochures.

Doctors from the Department of Infectious Diseases have been advising medical professionals in public hospitals to make sure antibiotics are used correctly. They are working together with pharmacies to assess the use of antibiotics and providing support when necessary.

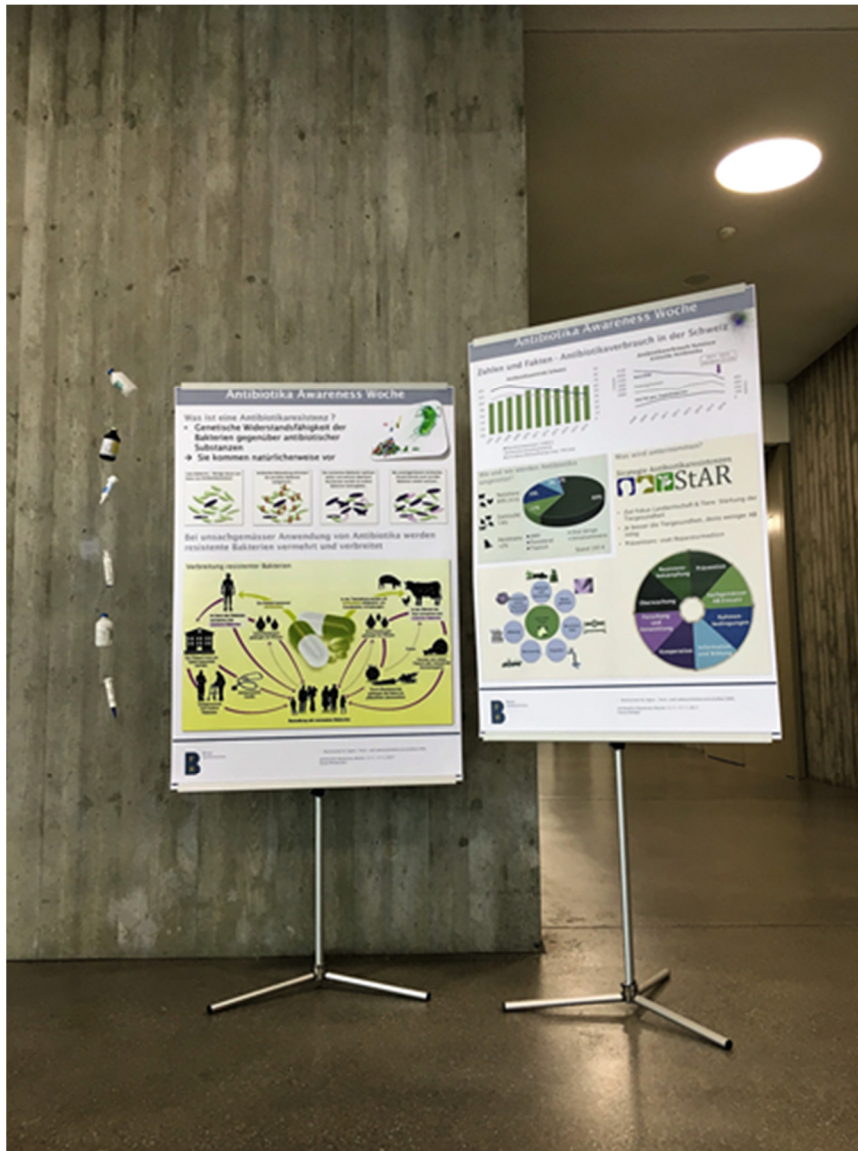
Poster campaign with flyers and a memory game by HPCi Vaud (whole week)

In its capacity as a cantonal organisation for preventing and controlling infections, HPCi Vaud is communicating the WHO and FOPH strategy by means of an awareness-raising campaign aimed at the public and at healthcare professionals. The campaign aims to inform the public about the reasons for having antibiotics, the way they work and how to use them correctly. To ensure that the public use antibiotics to treat bacterial infections and no longer as a systematic medication for infections, the "Antibiotics Memory" game was devised with the aim of finding pairs of bacteria and their antibiotics and to bring in other illnesses as traps. The game was distributed among professionals working at medical and social institutions in the Canton of Vaud during Antibiotic Awareness Week.



Exhibition in the foyer of the School of Agriculture, Forest and Food Sciences HAFL (whole week)

The exhibition featured HAFL projects looking into the topic of reducing the use of antibiotics.



Press conference organised by the Swiss Farmers' Union, 13 November 17

Agricultural stakeholders and vets presented their activities and planned improvements at a press conference for Antibiotic Awareness Week on 13 November 17 in Moosseedorf. The event focused on calf health, milk production and pig health. As emphasised by Martin Rufer, Swiss Farmers' Union Head of Production, Markets and the Environment, in his presentation, the group wishes to reduce the sale of antibiotics even further. Blaise Voumard, Vice-President of the Swiss Veterinary Society (GST), informed attendees that all use of antibiotics in animals will be registered in a database from 2019. The data will show when antibiotics are used most, which will enable preventative action to be taken. In 2016, Suisag launched the "plus health programme" to compare the treatment carried out at all participating farms. Over 800 farms are expected to have joined the initiative by the end of the year. The Calf Health Service is developing prevention ideas to halve the use of antibiotics in calves within six years by taking effective precautions. With individual measures such as advice, complementary medicine and selective breeding, the Swiss milk producers' association Schweizer Milchproduzenten (SMP) aims to improve cows' health. According to Stephan Hagenbuch, Director of the SMP, the campaign to raise awareness is going well, but producers still need to pay greater attention to their use of antibiotics.



Information event of the UFA, Bühl test centre, 14 November 2017

In a talk organised for media representatives and vets held at the Bühl test centre in Hendschiken on Tuesday, 14 November 2017, UFA AG told attendees about how to use fewer antibiotics by means of targeted calf rearing. With the Colorispotop project, UFA joined forces with Prof. Kaske from Vet-Suisse/Uni Zurich to halve the amount of antibiotics used in calf rearing. The presentation also highlighted monitoring animals and responding promptly as other key factors in successfully reducing the amount of antibiotics used. At UFA Bühl, the new SmartCalf System was installed for the first time in Switzerland to help improve management. The stable systems there allow individual aspects of animal farming and feeding to be compared while keeping the other conditions the same.

Symposium of Public Health Switzerland “Antibiotic resistance – where do we stand?”, 14 November 2017

In the framework of the symposium researchers, politicians and practitioners discussed about the state of affairs concerning antibiotic resistance in Switzerland. Stakeholders must all work together to ensure antibiotics remain effective against infectious diseases in future too. The more than 80 attendees at the symposium in Bern on 14 November were in agreement on this point. Public Health Switzerland, an association of healthcare professionals, extended invitations to the event under the heading “Antibiotic resistance – where do we stand?”.

One of the objectives was to promote networking and exchanges between actors from a wide range of domains. Interest in the symposium was keen: besides NRP 72 researchers, it attracted representatives from human and veterinary medical associations, the Swiss Association of Pharmacists, hospitals, cantonal health departments, research institutions and pharmaceutical companies, and the World Health Organization (WHO).

Several speakers presented brief synopses of the current situation, including a status update on the Swiss federal government’s national antibiotic resistance strategy (StAR). Karin Wäfler, StAR Project Manager with the Federal Office of Public Health, explained that measures had already been initiated in most areas under StAR and that few areas were still untouched. Pascal Strupler, Director of the Federal Office of Public Health (FOPH), considers it a stroke of luck that StAR and NRP 72 are running concurrently: “The research findings will close gaps in our knowledge and make strategy implementation more efficient.”

Christoph Dehio, president of the Steering Committee of NRP 72, outlined those areas where research is seeking solutions, and what can be expected. Based on the One-Health approach, which underpins both Swiss and international strategies, research is focusing on different areas. The projects of NRP 72 are divided into three modules: research on the development and spread of resistance, new drugs and faster diagnostic techniques, as well as the optimised use of antibiotics.

Several speakers then presented their research projects, illustrating the different research areas.

In the podium discussion following the presentations various aspects were discussed in more depth.

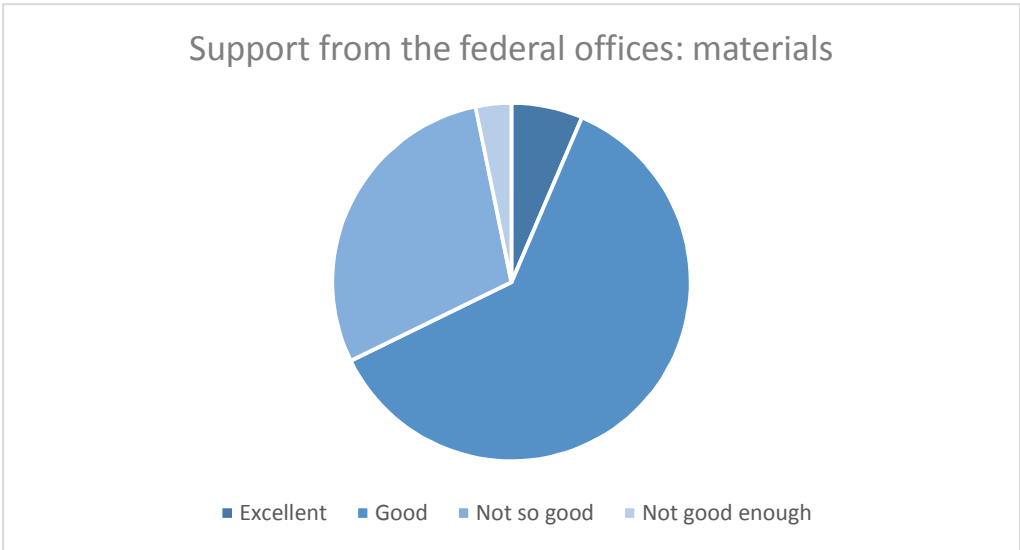
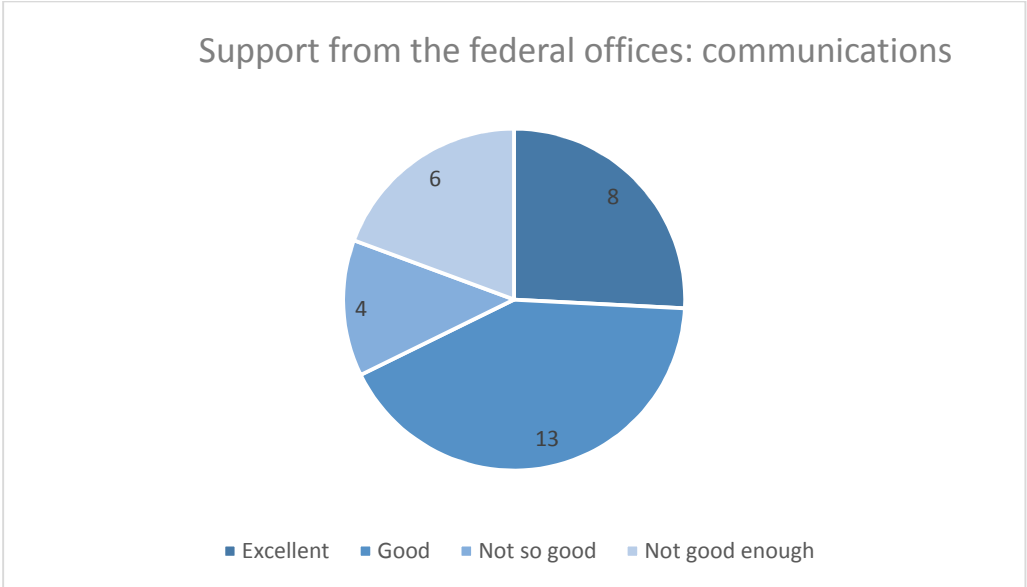
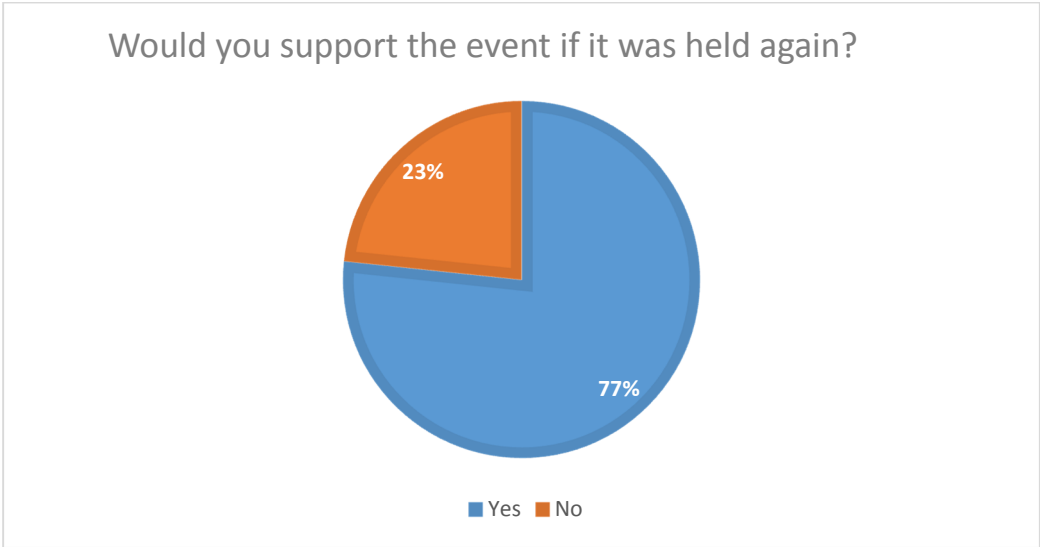
Information evening under the aegis of the Canton Uri agricultural advice service, 21 November 2017

The event took place to a great response in Altdorf UR under the banner of “StAR: reduce the use of antibiotics”. The Schützenhaus Altdorf was full to bursting for the event, and extra chairs had to be brought in (around 100 attendees). Collaboration with the Uri Braunvieh breeders’ association, the Uri-Gotthard breeders’ group and local veterinarian Thomas Stadler from Gross- und Nutztierpraxis Uri AG paid dividends.

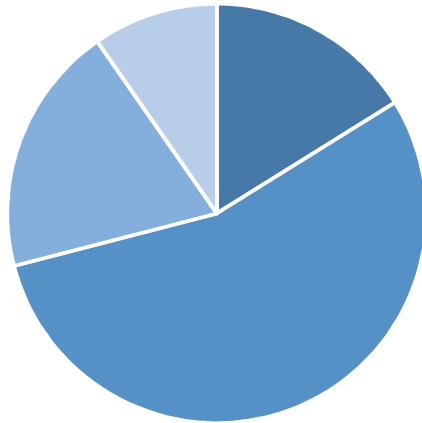


Evaluation of questionnaire

22 German, 9 French and 0 Italian questionnaires were submitted.

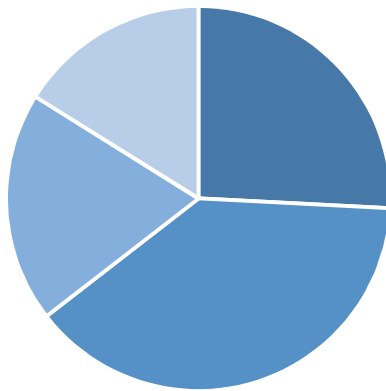


Support from the federal offices: thematic and subject-matter support



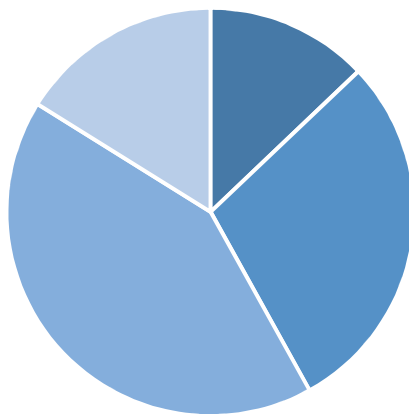
■ Excellent ■ Good ■ Not so good ■ Not good enough

Support from F+W agency



■ Excellent ■ Good ■ Not so good ■ Not good enough

Was awareness of the other activities sufficient?



■ Excellent ■ Good ■ Not so good ■ Not good enough

Summary

According to the questionnaires submitted, the activities reached 20,540 people directly (and several hundred thousand indirectly via media relations work). Many actors were motivated to get involved in the week because they believe this is an important issue, and all areas are affected (“I think this issue is very important and deserves plenty of attention”). Various remarks indicate that the week and the way it was organised got a good response (for example “getting involved is important, and possible without too much effort and expense”). Some 77% of the actors would take part again in 2018, and 68% were satisfied with the federal offices’ communication of the event. The materials provided (give-aways, printed matter and download poster) and the work of the F+W agency got the thumbs-up from around two-thirds of those who responded. The thematic and subject-matter support provided by the federal offices received even greater approval.

A shortcoming was identified in the way the other actors had communicated the activities, with almost two-thirds dissatisfied and wanting to be informed earlier and better in the future.

The remarks accompanying the responses were very heterogeneous. In particular for the questions given a positive response there were very few additional remarks: for example the work of the F+W agency was praised (“very quick responses”).

There were negative remarks on things like the fairly late delivery of giveaways and the support provided by the federal offices and the F+W agency. Two actors criticised the fact that the federal authorities heralded the week with a media conference on Friday, 10 November, leaving the activities of the other actors “in a vacuum”.

The responses regarding the most important insights were also very heterogeneous (“The issue gets a lot of interest, and known facts that are nothing new to us are still seen as a novelty”, “reached many important people in the system by very straightforward means”, “the AA Week and the various events failed to get citizens on board”). Any responses from participants in the events were predominantly positive.