

Agriculture Bill

Sarah Wollaston Chair, Health and Social Care Committee, Chair, Liaison Committee (Commons)

The chief medical officer, Dame Sally Davies, has described antimicrobial resistance as a "catastrophic threat", and the Secretary of State will know that it is not only in human healthcare but sometimes in farming that we see inappropriate use of antimicrobials, thus increasing the risk that we will lose their benefit to human health. Will he use the Bill as a vehicle to drive down further inappropriate antimicrobial prescribing in agriculture and to incentivise farmers who do the right thing? Will he also make sure that we are not exposed to products from places around the world where antimicrobials are used wholly inappropriately, including with environmental contamination?

Michael Gove The Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

The Chair of the Select Committee on Health and Social Care makes an absolutely important point. I have had the opportunity to talk to Dame Sally Davies, who has written a brilliant short book about the vital importance of dealing with antimicrobial resistance. I should also pay tribute to Lord O'Neill, who led work under Prime Minister David Cameron on this. My hon. Friend is absolutely right to say that the Bill contains provisions to provide support and payments to farmers who take the appropriate animal health and welfare measures to ensure that we can fight the overuse of antibiotics, which is both a threat to human and animal health, and an environmental danger.

They Work For You