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## Antibiotic-free meat more expensive, says Vet Dept

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**JOHOR BARU:** Consumers will have to pay more if the use of antibiotics on livestock is banned or stopped, said Veterinary Services Department director-general Datuk Dr Kamarudin Md Isa.

He said the mortality rate among farm animals in the country would be high if antibiotic use was banned.

The department, he said, would monitor the use of antibiotics on livestock as the existing laws were sufficient to punish industry players found using banned antibiotics.

"Malaysia is not the only country where antibiotics are still used on farm animals. They are used in 190 countries," he told a press conference at a national-level Veterinary Day 2016 event here.

Dr Kamarudin said the use of antibiotics on livestock was still needed as farm animals, like human beings, also suffer from ailments such as fever, flu and cough.

He said several developed countries had stopped using antibiotics on livestock and practised organic animal rearing instead.

"But consumers there have to pay higher prices for meat.

"Are we ready to fork out extra money to enjoy organic meat?" he asked.