Use of lidocaine in pigs

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EU amends conditions for use of lidocaine in piglets

Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2026/892 of 23 April 2026 amending Regulation (EU) No 37/2010 as regards the classification of the substance lidocaine with respect to its maximum residue limit in foodstuffs of animal origin

Update

The European Union (EU) has amended the conditions for use of lidocaine in pigs. The permitted use of lidocaine has been extended to allow its injection into the scrotum, testicles, and spermatic cord of piglets up to the age of 7 days.

Impacted products

Products from pigs

What is changing?

The EU has amended the conditions for use of lidocaine in pigs. Lidocaine may be used as pain relief prior to castration. The new Regulation allows the injection of lidocaine into the scrotum, testicles, and spermatic cord in piglets up to 7 days of age. Previously, lidocaine could only be used on the skin (cutaneous) or on damaged tissues (epilesional).

Detailed conditions of use are set out in the Annex of Regulation 2026/892.

Why?

In February 2024, Scanvet Animal Health A/S requested the European Medicines Agency (EMA) to modify the existing conditions for the use of lidocaine in piglets. The EMA concluded that the new injectable use in young piglets is no risk for consumers, as the residue exposure to lidocaine (and its metabolite 2,6-xylidine) remains well below the acceptable limits (EMA 2025).

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Timeline

The new conditions of use apply from **14 May 2026**.

Background

Regulation 470/2009 requires maximum residue limits (MRLs) to be set for pharmacologically active substances used in veterinary medicinal products administered to food-producing animals in the EU. MRLs are evaluated by the EMA.

No MRLs are required for lidocaine in pigs, but there are restrictions on how and when lidocaine is administered. MRLs are in place for lidocaine administered to cows (see Annex to Regulation 2026/892).

Authorised active substances and their conditions of use, including MRLs, are set out in Regulation 37/2010, which is now updated by this new Regulation.

Resources

EMA (2025) Opinion and EPMAR of the Committee for Veterinary Medicinal Products on the establishment of maximum residue limits. Substance: Lidocaine. European Medicines Agency.

Regulation 37/2010 on pharmacologically active substances and their classification regarding maximum residue limits in foodstuffs of animal origin

Regulation 470/2009 laying down Community procedures for the establishment of residue limits of pharmacologically active substances in foodstuffs of animal origin

Sources

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