

# Veterinary Feed Directive

There is only one thing for certain in our lives: change. And if you are a producer who uses antimicrobial medicated feed for prevention or treatment of disease in livestock, a modification to how you currently purchase this feed is looming on the horizon.

developed to protect public health and limit the development of antimicrobial resistance.

Under the veterinary feed directive rule, all medically important antimicrobial feed medications will be used with veterinary supervision.

*Producers should not wait to initiate a conversation with their veterinarian and feed supplier and/or distributor regarding the VFD.*

The Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) Veterinary Feed Directive (VFD) and Guidance for Industry 213 took effect on October 1, 2015. It will be fully implemented on January 1, 2017. The VFD is not a new rule. It was originally based on the FDA Guidance for Industry 209 established in April 2012, which delineated policy for the judicious use of medically important antibiotics in food production animals. These policies were

Producers will need a written and valid VFD issued from their valid veterinarian-client-patient relationship (VCPR) veterinarian in order to purchase proper feed-additive medications from their feed supplier and/or distributor.

Also, companies will remove labeled production and performance claims for medically important antimicrobials.

## Medically Important Antibiotics

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- Penicillins
- Glycopeptides
- Cephalosporins
- Tetracyclines
- Macrolides
- Quinolones
- Sulfas
- Fluoroquinolones

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## Feed Antibiotics No Longer Allowed For

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- Enhanced growth
- Improve feed efficiency

In order to have a valid VFD, you will need to work with your veterinarian with whom you have established a valid VCPR. Your VCPR veterinarian will examine and diagnose the animal's condition and determine if the use of feed-additive medication is necessary. The veterinarian-issued VFD is for any producer who would like to purchase feed containing antimicrobials that are medically important. Records will need to be maintained by the veterinarian, feed distributor and the producer for two years.

Antimicrobials have been used for years for the treatment of diseases in food production animals; those same medications are also used for treatment of human disease. The use and/or

overuse of antimicrobials may have human health concerns as they may lead to the development of resistance of once susceptible organisms, rendering the medication ineffective.

The licensed veterinary professional—and only the veterinary professional, not an owner—is allowed to use a FDA-approved drug in a manner that does not conform with the product label. This is also known as extra-label drug use (ELDU). Extra-label drug usage occurs when there is divergence from the label by usage in a different species, indication, dose, frequency and route of administration.

The Animal Medicinal Drug Use Clarification Act of 1994 (AMDUCA) and FDA regulations provide extra-

label drug use in all species, not just food producing animals. In addition, an algorithm is used to justify the usage of any approved FDA drug for extra-label drug use. However, certain medications are FDA prohibited and either may not be used at all or in an ELDU manner.

The Veterinary Feed Directive is a departure of previous practice and will take time to establish. The FDA has mandated the deadline for full VFD compliance to be January 1, 2017. Producers should not wait to initiate a conversation with their veterinarian and feed supplier/distributor about the logistics of the VFD rule as it will take time to streamline the process.

## *Resources*

### United States Food & Drug Administration (FDA)

<http://www.fda.gov/AnimalVeterinary/DevelopmentApprovalProcess/ucm071807.htm>

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