

SWINE SOLUTIONS

SMART PRODUCERS, SMART SOLUTIONS

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Veterinary Feed Directives:

Collaboration between farmer, vet and feed supplier is just what the doctor ordered

If you're a livestock producer, there's a pretty good chance that you've heard about the veterinary feed directive (VFD) final rule issued in early June by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

The rule is being implemented as a framework for the judicious use of medically important drugs – those drugs important for both animal and human health. It outlines the conditions under which farmers, veterinarians and feed providers will be permitted to include VFD-controlled antimicrobial drugs in the rations and drinking water of food-producing animals.

The rule will become effective October 1, 2015. The FDA intends to employ a phased implementation strategy, beginning with education for veterinarian, livestock producers, feed mill distributors and other distributors, with full enforcement taking effect by December, 2016.

Responsible Use

As a feed provider, Hubbard Feeds supports the judicious use of medically important antibiotics and is dedicated to helping customers build and maintain the nutrition program that includes the responsible use of antibiotics as directed by their veterinarian.

Hubbard's focus on gut health serves as a case in point. By working with customers to develop nutrition programs designed to achieve the highest level of gut health in every phase of production, the need for antibiotics for prevention and control of disease may be minimized.

Making Life Easier

While adapting to the new regulations will no doubt be an added burden on farmers, Hubbard Feeds customers can count on their feed provider for the level of expertise needed to manage the increasing responsibilities of feeding medicated rations.

The ABCs of VFDs

In addition to creating a new regulations for prescribing and reporting the use of medically important antimicrobials in animal feed, the FDA's final VFD rule has added an alphabet soup of new abbreviations with which farmers will need to become accustomed.

Here are a few of them along with the titles or processes to which the abbreviation refers:

VFD: Veterinary feed directives – The order issued by a licensed veterinarian in the course of professional practice, authorizing the use of animal feeds containing VFD drugs.

VFD drugs: Those drugs intended for use in or on animal feed which are limited to use under the professional supervision of a licensed veterinarian.

VCPR: Veterinary-client-patient relationship – The context under which veterinarians are limited to issuing VFDs. Standards to assess the validity of a VCPR are set by the state in which the veterinary is licensed to practice medicine. If the state has no VCPR standards, the VFD must meet federally defined standards.

ADAA: Animal Drug Availability Act – Passed by Congress in 1996 as a method of facilitating the approval and marketing of new animal drugs and medicated feeds. It is from this piece of legislation that the VFD regulatory category was created.

FDA: Food and Drug Administration – The federal agency that regulates both animal and human drugs, and enforces the VFD rule.

OTC: Over-the-counter – The current classification under which many soon-to-be-VFD feed-use antimicrobial drugs fall.

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Veterinary Feed Directives (cont.)

“Our goal is to make the customer’s life easier,” says Ernie Hansen, manager of swine nutrition and technical resources at Hubbard. “The reliance on suppliers is going to be significantly heavier under the new regulations. We want customers to use us as a resource as they become accustomed to and implement the new regulations.

“Hubbard takes a systems approach” he explains. We are an integral leg in the 3-legged stool of the VCPR-nutrition supplier relationship. Communication, verification, logistics, and compliance as well as quality nutrition solutions is our responsibility..... that we do not take lightly.

Compliance Collaboration

Like the valid veterinarian-client-patient relationship (VCPR) required for the issuance of a VFD, a close Hubbard-customer-veterinarian- collaboration will be an important tool for accurate and timely management of medicated feed orders.

“The veterinarian provides the customer’s VFD to the mill,” Hansen says, “then, for every medicated batch of feed, the feed mill will validate the premise ID and verify that the order is produced within the timeframe of the VFD.”

Animal Health suppliers are providing tools for farmers, veterinarians and feed mills on responsible use.

Animal health supplier Zoetis has begun the process by providing educational materials to help farmers understand and keep track of the VFD regulations.

In its publication, “Veterinary Feed Directive: Plan for a Successful Transition,” the company provides tips for preparing for the VFD implementation and tips for maintaining up-to-date VFDs. A website has also been created for updates: ResponsibleAntibioticUse.com.

Elanco has also developed tools for the responsible use of shared-use antibiotics and has partnered with Feedstuffs magazine to develop VFD Central, a website with resource materials, articles and VFD information specific to farmers, veterinarians and feed mills. VFD Central can be found online by going to feedstuffs.com/vfd.

Take-away Message

While it’s likely that questions will still emerge about how VFD implementation will work in the real world, rest assured that Hubbard will be there, helping ease the way for their customers.

“There are still details that will need to be fine-tuned and Hubbard will be there to help out,” Hansen says. “It’s what we’re good at and it makes our customer’s life easier.”

For more information on Hubbard Feeds, visit www.hubbardfeeds.com.



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How is antibiotic use going to change under proposals put forth by the FDA?

Antibiotics aren't going away, but on-farm use will change. In modern swine production antibiotics are used in four ways:

1. **Treat** animals diagnosed with an illness
2. **Control** the spread of an illness in a herd
3. **Prevent** illness in healthy animals
4. **Enhance** growth or improve feed efficiency

The FDA says that "medically important" antibiotics would still be available for those first three uses under the supervision of a veterinarian. But they could not be used for the fourth option: enhancing growth or improving feed efficiency. "Medically important" refers to drugs considered important for therapeutic use in humans.

The FDA's goal is to work with the production sector to eliminate the use of medically important antibiotics for growth promotion and to bring therapeutic use—to treat, control or prevent specific disease—under veterinary oversight.

Note that prevention remains an appropriate therapeutic use of antibiotics as determined by a veterinarian. It's also important to clarify that performance claims still can be made for drugs that are used exclusively in animals (such as ionophores).

At the centerpiece of FDA's policy are 283 products that will be added to the VFD list, said Bill Flynn, DVM, deputy director for science policy at FDA's Center for Veterinary Medicine. Over-the-counter sales of the products will be eliminated, and their use will require veterinary oversight and diagnosis for a specific animal-health condition. Producers will need a VFD to gain access to the affected feed-based antibiotics and a prescription for water-based products.

Affected by FDA proposals

Shared use (Medically important for human use)

Drugs deemed "important for human medicine" and used by both animals and humans such as:

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

Therapeutic uses

(still allowed under veterinary supervision)

- Treat** animals diagnosed with an illness
- Control** the spread of disease in a herd
- Prevent** illness in healthy animals when exposure is likely

Production uses (No longer allowed)

- Enhance** growth or improve feed efficiency

Unaffected by FDA proposals

Animal use only

Drugs used exclusively in animals

- Ionophores (narasin)
- Polypeptides
- Carbadox
- Bambermycin
- Pleuromutlin

*Information courtesy of
Elanco Animal Health*

A general list of those antibiotics that will be affected by the FDA is shown here in the charts above. Included in that information is a list of drugs used specifically by animals that will not be affected.

Most producers already work closely with their veterinarian to achieve proper decisions and use of antibiotics when needed to ensure healthy pigs and safe food. However there will be some individuals that will need to start to adapt to the changes that will be coming. Here are four things that you can do today to initiate that process.

1. Secure a good working relationship with your herd veterinarian and build familiarity with your production system.
2. Sit down with your veterinarian to evaluate all animal-health management protocols and herd vaccination programs. Review all swine medications currently being used.

3. Discuss which products are affected by veterinary feed directives and prescriptions and how the process will work on the farm.
4. Walk through the record-keeping requirements and strategies.

Learn more

To learn more about antimicrobial resistance (and which products are affected), visit www.fda.gov/animal-veterinary/safetyhealth/antimicrobialresistance/default.htm

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Products and Answers that WORK®

Ridley joins Alltech family

On June 18, 2015, Alltech announced that it had completed the acquisition of Ridley, Inc., the parent company of Hubbard Feeds.

As a supplier of the industry's most advanced animal nutrition products and solutions, Alltech's core business is improving animal health and performance by adding nutritional value to feed through innovative technologies.

The addition of Ridley to the Alltech family gives Hubbard Feeds customers access to new technologies and support programs created to enable farmers to realize greater efficiency, profitability and sustainability on their farms.

"This combination is about our customers," said Dr. Pearse Lyons, founder and president of Alltech. "We will now have an enhanced ability to deliver solutions built upon the history, strength and scientific innovation of both companies."

Ernie Hansen, manager of swine nutrition and technical resources at Hubbard agrees.

"We have always worked hard to help our customers identify, assess and implement solutions" he says. "Joining the Alltech family provides greater access to innovative technologies that will have a positive impact on their operations."

For more information on Hubbard Feeds, visit
www.hubbardfeeds.com.

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