

News Column  
by Greg McClure, KSU-Riley County Extension Agriculture Agent  
110 Courthouse Plaza  
Manhattan, KS 66502

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Phone: 785/537-6350  
Fax: 785/537-6353

## VETERINARY FEED DIRECTIVE

When I was young I went to the ASC and SCS offices with my dad. At some point, ASC became ASCS, and then maybe something else for a few months before becoming FSA. SCS morphed to become NRCS. I worked with both offices when I signed up for the CRP. I think it was still the ASCS office when I got my first LDP. Those checks came from the CCC or the USDA.

Folks with confined animal feeding operations (CAFOs) get to work with KDHE and sometimes EPA. A few years ago, swine producers dealt with an outbreak of PEDV. Cattlemen study things like EBVs and EPDs and try to prevent diseases like IBR and BVD. And soybean producers try to avoid SCN, while wheat producers work to prevent WSMV.

Oh, and let's not forget ARC and PLC. Those checks should be arriving this month via a process that my bank calls ACH. I had to look that one up – Automatic Clearing House.

Now, if you're not already confused, buckle your seat belts because the FDA has issued new rules that will require you to utilize your VCPR to get a VFD to use feed additive antibiotics, including CTC.

OK. I admit it. The new VFD rule isn't really that complicated. It is important – and will impact many livestock producers – but not really hard to understand.

VFD stands for Veterinary Feed Directive. The experts are careful to point out that a veterinary feed directive is not a prescription, but it is easiest for most people to understand if

they compare it to a prescription, written by your doctor or veterinarian, allowing you to use a medication not available over the counter (OTC) without written permission. You need a prescription to buy those prescription medications and you need a veterinary feed directive to purchase and use antibiotic feed additives.

Effective January 1, 2017, medically important feed-grade antimicrobial drugs will no longer be labeled for growth promotion. The most common drugs affected are the tetracyclines (chlortetracycline or CTC, and oxytetracycline), sulfonamides, tylosin, neomycin, and virginiamycin. A VFD will now be required to purchase and feed any of those products.

What this means to producers is that they will no longer be able feed antibiotics for growth promotion, and they will not be allowed to routinely feed an antibiotic to prevent an expected disease problem. However, once a problem has been diagnosed by their veterinarian, then the veterinarian can write a veterinary feed directive allowing the use of a feed-grade antibiotic.

This is the point where we learn one more acronym, VCPR. A VCPR is a Veterinary Client Patient Relationship. To have a valid VCPR the veterinarian must be familiar with the producer's operation and must have made medically timely visits to the premise. There has to be a relationship between the veterinarian and the client before the vet can legally write a VFD.

A notable difference between a prescription and a VFD is that a veterinarian cannot authorize extra label use of a feed medication. Feed medications must be used exactly as approved on the label, whereas prescription medications may be used at higher doses, for longer duration, on different species, or for different diseases,...if prescribed by a veterinarian. You can't do that with feed additive medications.

The biggest concern locally is probably going to be the loss of tetracyclines (CTC) in

mineral for prevention of anaplasmosis. Tetracyclines can still be used for treatment, but not for prevention. And, regulators will be watching the dosage more carefully than in the past.

Anaplasmosis prevention is a problem we really don't have figured out yet.

Anaplasmosis is a serious disease that causes abortions and death loss. Nobody wants to wait to treat a problem that could have been prevented, but I can't offer a solution to this one.

The best advice we can offer is to consult your veterinarian. The veterinarian will be the one who needs to write the veterinary feed directive anyway, so we will leave this one in her or her hands.

I said this was simple, so here's the bottom line. Beginning January 1, 2017 you will need to consult with your veterinarian before feeding an antibiotic to livestock. Ionophores (Rumensin and Bovatec) and coccidiosis treatments (Decoxx and Corid) are not affected. They can still be fed without a VFD.

If you have questions, you can reach me at the Riley County Extension Office at 785/537-6350. Or, you can send e-mail to [gmclure@ksu.edu](mailto:gmclure@ksu.edu).

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