



Livestock producers need to prepare for veterinary feed directive.

by **Jason Vance**, University of Missouri

The clock is ticking for livestock producers as new Food and Drug Administration (FDA) rules go into effect in December governing all feed-grade and water-soluble antibiotics that are considered medically important.

Producers will need a veterinary feed directive (VFD) from their veterinarian to use feed-grade antibiotics or a prescription to use water-soluble antibiotics. Craig Payne, director of veterinary extension and continuing education at the University of Missouri (MU), says it's important to talk to your veterinarian sooner rather than later.

"Having that conversation now versus after Jan. 1, 2017, would be the best approach,"

Payne says. "People who weren't aware of the changes will be coming in, and that will create enough problems in and of itself."

For veterinarians to issue a VFD or prescription, they must have a veterinarian-client-patient relationship (VCPR) with the producer. In other words, they must have a working relationship with the producer and be acquainted with care and keeping of the animals. If producers aren't currently using a veterinarian, they need to find one and start developing that relationship.

"Those who have a veterinarian need to be discussing what kind of process they are going to go through to request an antibiotic," Payne says.

The labeling changes seek to eliminate use of antibiotics for production purposes, such as improved feed efficiency, and move medically important feed-grade and water-soluble antibiotics from over-the-counter availability to veterinary supervision.

Payne has been talking to groups throughout the state to make them aware of the changes. Many of the groups he has spoken to are concerned about the availability of livestock veterinarians in some areas. Many producers are also wondering about cost. Payne says that is another reason to talk to your veterinarian.

"The main thing is to have that conversation with a veterinarian, figure out if this is going to affect you and, if so, put a process in place to be able to continue using these antibiotics," Payne says.

To view the antibiotic labeling changes, go to <http://1.usa.gov/1plWFWi>.



Editor's Note: Jason Vance is a writer for the University of Missouri Extension.

For more

For more on the veterinary feed directive (VFD), review these resources:

- ▶ "Always Getting Better," February 2016 *Angus Journal*, pp. 236, 238-239.
- ▶ "How Will VFD Affect You?" October 2015 *Angus Journal*, pp. 156-157.
- ▶ "Vet Call: New rules concerning antibiotic use in cattle," September 2015 *Angus Journal*, pp. 249.
- ▶ "Policy Matters," April 2015 *Angus Journal*, pp. 182-184.
- ▶ "Beef Business: FDA Announces public meetings to discuss impact of antimicrobial resistance strategy with food-animal producers and veterinarians," April 2013 *Angus Journal*, p. 180, 182-183.
- ▶ "Veterinary Feed Directive," information page by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), www.fda.gov/AnimalVeterinary/DevelopmentApprovalProcess/ucm071807.htm
- ▶ "Fact Sheet: Veterinary Feed Directive Final Rule and Next Steps," FDA fact sheet, www.fda.gov/AnimalVeterinary/DevelopmentApprovalProcess/ucm449019.htm
- ▶ "Guidance for Industry: Small Entity Compliance Guide: Veterinary Feed Directive Regulation Question and Answers," FDA, www.fda.gov/downloads/AnimalVeterinary/GuidanceComplianceEnforcement/GuidanceforIndustry/ucm052660.pdf.
- ▶ "Understanding the Veterinary Feed Directive," North Dakota State University, <https://www.ag.ndsu.edu/pubs/ansci/livestoc/v1719.pdf>.