

To ensure a safe food supply, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) oversees the use of animal medications. Some medications have been approved for use without a veterinarian's permission, while others require permission. Recently, the FDA changed how some antibiotic medications, which are important to human medicine, are used for animal feed. After January 1, 2017, these medications will require a Veterinary Feed Directive (VFD) order to be used in a medicated feed.

Many over-the-counter feed-grade antibiotics will be moved to VFD status by January 1, 2017.

What is a medicated feed and why is it used?

Medicated feed is feed with a specific drug added to it. Medicated feed is fed to animals to prevent illness or treat an animal when it is sick. Medicated feeds are just one of the good animal care and well-being practices farmers and animal owners use to keep their animals healthy.

Is all feed medicated?

No, when you purchase feed, you have the option to buy feed without medications mixed into it.

Who is impacted by these changes?

Livestock owners, including youth with animal projects, who have decided to feed their animals medicated feeds.

For more information on the Veterinary Feed Directive, contact your local NDSU Extension agent or veterinarian, or visit:

www.ag.ndsu.edu/stewardship/veterinary-feed-directive



Antibiotics in Feed

The Producers' Guide to the Veterinary Feed Directive



**NORTH DAKOTA
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**
Animal Health Division or
Livestock Development Division (701) 328-2231

NDSU EXTENSION SERVICE
Dr. Gerald Stokka (701) 231-5082

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What does VFD stand for?

Veterinary Feed Directive

What is a VFD drug and why did the FDA change their process?

A VFD drug is an antibiotic used for both human and animal medicine. It's important these drugs are used correctly. The FDA's job is to ensure these drugs are used properly which is why they are requiring a VFD order for some medicated feed beginning January 1, 2017.

Are all antibiotics affected?

No, not all antibiotics will be considered VFD drugs. The use of injectable antibiotics will not be affected; and some drugs used in water will now require a prescription from a veterinarian. Ionophores and coccidiostats are not affected unless they are fed with a drug that requires a VFD.

How does a VFD order work?

A VFD order is similar to a prescription you would get from your human doctor, however a veterinarian will be giving you a VFD order for a medicated feed.

How do you get a VFD order?

To obtain a VFD order, you must have an established veterinarian-client-patient relationship (VCPR) with a veterinarian. A VCPR is a working relationship between a veterinarian and a person who raises livestock (client). The veterinarian's primary role is to help and advise the client in determining which medications are appropriate for their animals (the patients).

Medicated feed labels will always indicate what animals are allowed to have the feed.

This drug ingredient requires a VFD order from your veterinarian.

VFD drugs will always have this statement on the label.

Sample Feed Label

Beef Starter Ration Medicated

For Feedlot Cattle: For control of bacterial pneumonia associated with shipping fever complex caused by Pasteurella spp. susceptible to Chlortetracycline.

ACTIVE DRUG INGREDIENT:
Chlortetracycline 70 g/ton

GUARANTEED ANALYSIS:
Crude Protein.....not less than 14.0%
Crude Fat.....not less than 2.5%
Crude Fiber.....not more than 20.0%
Calcium.....not less than 0.5%
Calcium.....not more than 1.0%
Phosphorus.....not less than 0.4%
Salt.....not less than 0.25%
Salt.....not more than 0.75%
Potassium.....not less than 1.3%
Selenium.....not less than 0.25 ppm
Vitamin.....A not less than 6,600 IU/lb
Vitamin.....D not less than 660 IU/lb
Vitamin.....E not less than 40 IU/lb

INGREDIENTS: Processed Grain Byproducts, Forage Products, Roughage Products, Sodium Bentonite, Molasses Products, Grain Products, Calcium Carbonate, Salt, Sodium Selenite, Yeast Culture, Vitamin E Supplement, Vitamin A Supplement, Vitamin D3 Supplement, Zinc Amino Acid Complex, Copper Amino Acid Complex, Zinc Sulfate.

FEEDING DIRECTIONS: Feed when starting cattle post weaning. It combines roughage, grain and supplement in a total ration. Feed at the rate of 10 pounds per head daily to provide 350 milligrams of chlortetracycline per head daily. Offering 10% of total daily intake as good quality grass hay may help minimize management problems. After the starting period, cattle should be gradually switched to the roughage, grain and supplement ration which will be used for the balance of the feeding period.

WARNING: A withdrawal period has not been established for this product in pre-ruminating calves. Do not use in calves to be processed for veal. Withdraw 2 days prior to slaughter.

CAUTION: Federal law restricts medicated feed containing this VFD drug to use by or on the order of a licensed veterinarian.

How do you know if you need a VFD order?

As seen in the example, feed labels of VFD drugs have the following statement: "Caution: Federal law restricts medicated feed containing this VFD drug to use by or on the order of a licensed veterinarian."

What are examples of medications that will require a VFD order?

Examples of feed-grade medications moving to VFD drug status are chlortetracycline, tylosin and penicillin. The detailed list can be found at www.ag.ndsu.edu/stewardship/veterinary-feed-directive.

Where can I buy feed with my VFD order?

You can buy VFD feeds at any mill, retailer or other establishment listed as a distributor or manufacturer with the FDA. The list can be found at www.ag.ndsu.edu/stewardship/veterinary-feed-directive. If you are purchasing feed that requires a VFD order, you will need to present the VFD order before purchase.

How do feed stores check for VFD orders?

Previously, medicated feeds were purchased without documentation at your feed store or mill. However, starting January 1, 2017, you must first present a VFD order, written by a veterinarian, to purchase VFD feeds.

What records will I need to keep?

Records will need to be kept by the livestock owner, veterinarian and feed distributor for two years. The original VFD order will be kept by the veterinarian.