

## Lincoln/East Adams County 4-H Article

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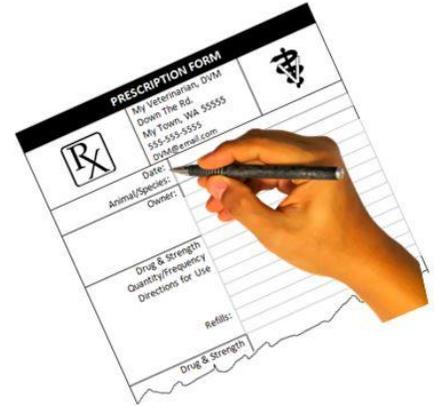
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## Veterinary Feed Directive (VFD) What 4-H Livestock Exhibitors Need To Know

As YOU begin to purchase and feed your livestock for the Junior Livestock Show or county fair this spring and summer there is one additional item that is important for you to consider in feeding, managing and keeping records for your animal.

The use of medications in feed has been an effective and convenient method to prevent and treat certain disease conditions in groups of livestock. The proper use of feed medications has changed and will need to be under the oversight and order of a veterinarian. The order is known as a veterinary feed directive (VFD).



### Veterinary Feed Directive for Medicated Feed

A veterinary feed directive is a written statement issued by a licensed veterinarian in the course of the veterinarian's professional practice that orders the use of a VFD drug in or on an animal feed. This written statement authorizes the client to obtain and use the VFD drug in or on animal feed to treat the client's animals only in accordance with the directions for use approved or indexed by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

A veterinary feed directive also is referred to as a VFD order. According to FDA Guidance Policy 213, all medically **important antimicrobial drugs** will be used with appropriate veterinary supervision. VFD-medicated feed requires that a veterinarian, under a valid veterinarian-client-patient relationship (VCPR), examine and diagnose animal conditions and determine that the use of a VFD-medicated feed is necessary.

### Veterinary Supervision

A VFD can be written for the use of a medicated feed as long as the animals and operation are under the supervision of a veterinarian and in the course of the veterinarian's professional practice. The veterinarian also must be licensed and in compliance with appropriate state and federal regulations. The VCPR (veterinary client-patient relationship) still is implied here, but specific language will not be used. A valid VCPR exists when:

- The veterinarian assumes responsibility for making medical judgments regarding health and the need for medical treatment, and the client has agreed to follow the veterinary instructions.
- The veterinarian has sufficient knowledge of the animals to make a general or preliminary diagnosis.

- The veterinarian is available for follow-up in the case of animals having adverse reactions or failing to respond to therapy. In addition, the veterinarian must be familiar with the operation and make periodic visits to the operation.
- In most states, veterinarians will need to be licensed in the state in which the animals are located.

## Veterinarian Responsibility

The veterinarian issues a VFD by filling out a preprinted, multipart form (preapproved by the FDA's Center for Veterinary Medicine) supplied by the drug sponsor. These forms will be available for downloading at the drug sponsor's website. The producer then presents this form to the feed supplier, who will manufacture and distribute the feed in accordance with the VFD.

VFD feed can be fed only in a manner consistent with the FDA conditions of approval, and extra-label use is strictly prohibited. VFD feed may not be distributed without a signed VFD form. The veterinarian, producer and company supplying the VFD feed must all retain copies of the signed VFD form for a minimum of one year.

## What Does This Mean For 4-H Members Who Exhibit Livestock?

- There will be less availability of medications that were in various feeds and manufacturers will be looking to alternatives (other medications or products) that will not be regulated, but at the same time may not be as effective.
- The VFD record is something that the Veterinarian is responsible for and will keep electronically. Copies will be provided to the YOU (4-H Youth) upon services rendered. Having a VCPR (Veterinary Client Patient Relationship) will be more important than ever...get to know your Vet!
- Maintain records showing a pattern of "Best Practices" and "Good Management" will help protect and support your interest. Keep feed records for a minimum 2 years after your animal has entered the food chain...sold at the market sale at the fair.
- Create a pattern of documentation: Make a copy or take a photo of all feed labels and maintain electronic notes of information found on the "Market Animal Health Record" that pertain to animals being fed...i.e. name of medicated feed and withdrawal dates.
- When you go to purchase feed for your animal you will be informed by the feed store that you need a prescription from a Vet. This will start the trail of records. If a prescription is not required then the feed store will not ask that question. You may need to determine whether the feed additive/ingredient has changed and if it is as effective. This will be another reason for VCPR as you can consult with the veterinarian to get there take on the new active ingredient as to its effectiveness.
- It is YOUR responsibility as a progressive 4-H member to do YOUR part to ensure that food that you produce is as SAFE as possible for the consumer.

## Summary

An understanding of the changes in the use of feed additive medications is important for 4-H livestock producers and veterinarians. All feed-grade medications used for disease prevention and therapy will require veterinary oversight and an accompanying veterinary feed directive.

4-H Livestock owners working with properly licensed practicing veterinarians can acquire a VFD, which allows the purchase and proper use of feed-additive medications. **Feed-grade medications can be used only according to label and dose indications, and no provisions allow for their use to promote growth and efficiency.**

## References

[www.fda.gov/downloads/AnimalVeterinary/Guidance](http://www.fda.gov/downloads/AnimalVeterinary/Guidance)

[ComplianceEnforcement/GuidanceforIndustry/UCM052660.pdf](http://www.fda.gov/downloads/AnimalVeterinary/Guidance/ComplianceEnforcement/GuidanceforIndustry/UCM052660.pdf)

[The-Veterinary-Feed-Directive-Veterinarian](#)

[Paul Kuber, PhD., Washington State University Extension, Northeastern Washington Livestock Specialist](#)

## More Resources

<http://agr.wa.gov/FoodAnimal/AnimalFeed/#VeterinaryFeedDirective>

<http://vetextension.cw.wsu.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/8/2015/05/Winter2016.pdf>

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