



What is the Veterinary Feed Directive?

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At a time of intensifying concern about the spread of antimicrobial resistance, a collective effort to promote the responsible use of antimicrobial drugs is gaining traction. One such example of this is the Veterinary Feed Directive (VFD), which became effective January 1, 2017. The VFD is an initiative of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

The VFD requires authorization from a veterinarian in order to use medically important antibiotics in animal feed or water. In order to receive this authorization, a veterinarian-client-patient relationship (VCPR) must exist. The VFD is intended to help promote the responsible use of medically important antibiotics in food-producing animals. It does this by stopping the use of antibiotics for growth promotion or feed efficiency purposes, while still allowing their use to control and treat certain diseases under the expertise of a veterinarian.

What Antibiotics Are Affected?

The VFD does not affect all antibiotics given in feed or water. Antibiotics that are not used in humans (non-medically important) can still be used for both therapeutic and production purposes. However, antibiotics that are also used by humans will no longer be allowed for production purposes and a VFD is required to treat, control, and prevent disease. The list of antibiotics requiring a VFD will be continually updated. An up-to-date list can be found on the FDA website at [this link](#).

What Drugs does the VFD Affect?

Affected	Unaffected
<p>Medically Important drugs- important for human medicine and used by animals and humans</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Penicillins - Cephalosporins - Quinolones - Fluoroquinones - Tetracyclines - Macrolides - Sulfas - Glycopeptides <p>* This list is not all-inclusive</p>	<p>Non-Medically Important drugs- only used in animals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bampermycin - Carbadox - Ionophores - Pleuromutilin - Polypeptides
<p>Production uses such as enhancing growth or improving feed efficiency are <u>no longer allowed</u></p>	<p>Production uses such as enhancing growth or improving feed efficiency are <u>still allowed</u></p>
<p>Therapeutic Uses are <u>still allowed</u> for both medically important and non-medically important drugs under veterinary supervision to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Treat animals diagnosed with an illness - Control the spread of illness in a herd - Prevent illness in health animals when exposure is likely 	

What is a Veterinary Client Patient Relationship (VCPR)?

A VCPR is a requirement for a VFD. Each state may have slightly different requirements for the VCPR, however all states must at least comply with the federal VCPR requirements, which include the following:

- The veterinarian must engage with the producer and assume responsibility for making clinical judgments about patient (animal) health.
- The veterinarian must have sufficient knowledge about the patient via examination and/or visit to the facility where the patient is managed.
- The veterinarian must provide any necessary follow-up care.

Additionally, the veterinarian, producer, and feed distributor must keep VFD records for two years. Make sure to check with your veterinarian if additional state-specific rules exist.

Why Following the Veterinary Feed Directive (VFD) is Important

The VFD can help slow the development antibiotic resistance – Consistent use of a small dose of antibiotics causes susceptible bacteria to die and resistant bacteria to live. The doses of antibiotics used for growth promotion and feed efficiency are very small compared to the doses needed to treat disease. These antibiotics are administered frequently, often daily, in feed or water. As a result, resistance can quickly occur and may spread to other animals, humans, and the environment. The VFD helps prevent this from happening by limiting unnecessary antibiotic administration.

The VFD helps humans and animals – Antibiotics are critical drugs that can help prevent and treat life-threatening illnesses. Under the supervision of a veterinarian who is trained in the responsible and appropriate use of antibiotic drugs, we can help ensure the welfare of people and animals now and for generations to come.

The VFD is part of a global strategy against antibiotic resistance – Efforts across human, animal, and environmental health worldwide are important in fighting antimicrobial resistance. Following the VFD and working with veterinarians is a significant contribution to the united front against a public health threat that impacts us all.



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