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COW SENSE CHRONICLE

MAY 2014

CHANGES IN THE USE OF FEED-GRADE ANTIBIOTICS FOR LIVESTOCK

Greetings from Bozeman! It's hard to believe the month of May has already arrived. This year's Montana Nutrition Conference and Livestock Forum was held April 22-23. Among the many great presentations was a wonderful overview from Dr. Russ Daly about the changes coming down the line in regard to the use of feed-grade antibiotics for livestock. Dr. Daly is the South Dakota State University Extension Veterinarian, and also serves as the State Public Health Veterinarian for the South Dakota Department of Health. For this month's Cow Sense Chronicle, I will provide a highlight of his remarks. You can find his and other conference speaker's slides at www.msuextension.org/beefcattle, then click "Resources".

The FDA has published two "Guidance for Industry" proposals, #209 and #213. The first deals with the use of medically important (to human medicine) antibiotics in food-producing animals, and the second recommends that drug companies voluntarily align their product use with GFI #209.

Guidance #209 has two main proposals: 1. the use of medically important antibiotics in food-producing animals should be limited to those uses that are considered necessary for assuring animal health; and 2. the use of medically important antibiotics in food-producing animals should be limited to those uses that include veterinary oversight or consultation. Guidance #213 asks drug companies to voluntarily revise their product labels to remove growth promotion and feed efficiency claims and provides for moving over-the-counter products to prescription or veterinary feed directive (VFD) status.

A VFD consists of paperwork for the drug in question which is filled out by a veterinarian (a veterinary-client-patient relationship should be in place) and gives a description of the livestock to be treated, some instructions to the feed mill, and an expiration date. The feed mill must have the VFD before feed can be distributed, and the feed mill must notify the FDA.

What will change for livestock producers and veterinarians as a result of these FDA Guidances? Growth promotion uses of antibiotics in feed will no longer be allowed (examples: CTC, Aureomycin, virginiamycin), and use of “medically important” feed antibiotics will need a VFD and can only be used for treatment, control, or prevention. Each state’s regulations or veterinary board will define what is a valid veterinary-client-patient relationship, and “medically important” water medications will move to prescription status.

What won’t change? Use of non-medically important drugs such as ionophores and coccidiosis treatments will remain unchanged. The ability to use feed-grade antibiotics that are currently labeled for treatment, control, and prevention won’t change, but will need a VFD. Injectable medication uses will remain the same, and extra-label uses of feed-grade medications is currently and will continue to be illegal. Feed mill operators will continue to supply feed medications and veterinarians should still be involved in medication decisions.

As Dr. Daly discussed, antibiotic resistance is a complex topic involving both animal and human health professionals. Hopefully this overview gives you some additional understanding of how these changes will impact the feed and livestock industry and your operation.

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		--- Gallatin Farm Fair ---				
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