

Take Steps Now to Celebrate

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Many of us begin the year with a New Year's resolution but how many of us stick with it. I recently read an article on setting and keeping a New Year's resolution. The article listed five steps to setting and keeping your resolution. The five steps include: plan time for your goal, check with your support system, prepare resources, set smaller progress goals and celebrate your success. If you own any type of critter, it does not matter if it is a chicken, rabbit, dog, cat, cow, horse or pig, your goal for 2023 is to have a valid veterinarian-client-patient-relationship (VCPR) established. Let's begin our path to a successful resolution.

The first step to setting and keeping your resolution mentioned in the article, is to plan time for your work.

On or before June 11, 2023 Guidance for the Industry #263 (GFI #263) issued by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) goes into effect. GFI #263 transfers all "medically important" antimicrobial drugs to prescription (RX) use only and will not be available over-the-counter (OTC). This means that some products may not be available at your local stores and that you will need a prescription from your veterinarian. So, the FDA has set the date for you to meet your goal.

Another step to your success in keeping your resolution is to check with your support system.

As an animal owner your main support system will be your veterinarian. If you currently use a veterinarian and have a valid VCPR established, congratulations you have accomplished your resolution and can celebrate. If you do not have a VCPR - you need to establish one. Montana law defines a "veterinarian/client/patient relationship" exists when all of the following conditions have been met:

- a. The veterinarian has assumed the responsibility for making clinical judgments regarding the health of the animal(s) and the need for medical treatment, and the client has agreed to follow the veterinarian's instructions.
- b. The veterinarian has sufficient knowledge of the animal(s) to initiate at least a general or preliminary diagnosis of the medical condition of the animal(s). This means that the veterinarian has recently seen and is personally acquainted with the keeping and care of the animal(s) by:
 - i. Virtue of an examination of the animal(s); or
 - ii. Medically appropriate and timely visits to the premise where the animal(s) are kept; and
- c. The veterinarian is available for follow-up evaluation in the event of adverse reactions or failure of treatment regimen.

If you are a new animal owner or a seasoned rancher, you will need to reach out to a veterinarian to create or ensure you have a VCPR on record.

The next key step to your resolution victory is to prepare resources. Do you have all the information you need accomplish your goal?

The reasoning for the creation of GFI #263 is part of an effort to combat antibiotic resistance. This guidance is a furtherance of Guidance of the Industry #213 (GFI#213) known as the Veterinary Feed Directive that went into effect in 2017. GFI #213 dealt with veterinary oversight of “medically important” antibiotics delivered to livestock via feed and/or water. In June of 2021, the FDA implemented a 2-year timeline for sponsors of “medically important” antimicrobial drugs voluntarily transfer them to prescription status. The end of the two years is June 11, 2023 and all “medically important” antimicrobials will require a veterinary prescription and must contain the prescription statement: “Caution: Federal law restricts this drug to use by or on the order of a licensed veterinarian”. Again, these products are not being removed from the marketplace, but they are being brought under veterinary oversight and you will need a prescription. This will include all medically important injectable antibiotics.

One of my favorite steps - Break down your goal into smaller successful steps. This will allow you to celebrate the little victories while making your resolution seem more manageable.

As mentioned earlier if you have a VCPR established – invite your veterinarian over and go to the next step and celebrate your success. However, if you still need some motivation.

One small goal that you can celebrate is that Ionophores, antiparasitics, injectable and oral nutritional supplements are not affected by the change. These products may still be purchased via OTC. Furthermore, Guidance #263 does not require the owner to purchase the antibiotics through their veterinarian, you may still use your regular suppliers as long as you have a prescription.

GFI #263 only affects “medically important” antimicrobials such as Oxytetracyclines, Penicillins, Sulfa based antibiotics, Tylosin, and Cephapirin.

Celebrate your success is the final step. You have worked hard to establish a valid veterinarian-client-patient-relationship. If an emergency arises your critters are covered thanks to your hard-working efforts. We tend to dwell on our lows too much and not celebrate our highs enough. Go have a good time and applaud yourself.

June 11, 2023 will be here before you know it. If you put the time in planning and implementing the steps outlined above, you will have a greater success of keeping your resolution of establishing a valid veterinarian-client-patient-relationship. Just like the holiday fruitcake do not stock up on pharmaceutical products as they have expiration dates and can lose effectiveness.

References

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