

# Managing Veterinary Feed Directive requests

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## Abstract

Navigating the intricacies of veterinary feed directives can be an intimidating part of practicing veterinary medicine. It is important to guide clients in this important regulatory compliance process and antimicrobial stewardship tool. By using effective communication when doing so, you will find success.

**Key words:** veterinary feed directive, antimicrobial stewardship, practice

## Involved parties

It is important to understand the involved parties on a farm and establish effective communication for the VCPR to be successful and for your veterinary feed directive (VFD) to be utilized successfully and correctly. It is best when the people at these intersections of farm management can have productive and frequent communication. The state in which you are practicing dictates the definition of the VCPR, the Code of Federal Regulations surrounding VFDs, and the AABP also provides resources to the definition of this relationship.

## Resources

Utilizing important resources cannot be overstated and the FDA Blue Bird Labels website is the one resource a veterinarian should reference for label information in any feed additive and to determine how to correctly prescribe a VFD feed additive. Understanding the types of feed regulated by the FDA is important. For the purposes of this paper, Type C feeds are referenced only.

## Relevant information

Information must be ascertained from the client either by clear communication, or on-farm observations, but it includes and is not limited to weight of animal, type of animal, volume of feed offered to animal, daily drug dose and which type of feed will be offered to the animal. Having an appreciation for common modifiers of intake will help you monitor the execution of your VFD on farm. Common modifiers of intake on the farms I serve include moisture content, forage/grain quality, energy density, weather, feed space, water source and stage of production for the animals being fed the VFD feed.

## Calculating dosage

Figuring the math behind correct dosages for VFDs feels complex at first glance. Converting feed to as-fed basis from dry matter is helpful due to the labels being written and proven on an as-fed basis. When you know the dry matter consumption of a feed, this amount (commonly expressed in pounds per day in the United States) needs to be divided by the dry matter percent of the feed being consumed to obtain the pounds fed on an as-fed basis. Utilizing the drug dose from the FDA Blue Bird Labels will allow you to calculate the dose needed for the VFD form.

## Record keeping

It is important for the veterinarian to understand the difference between expiration and duration when working with VFDs on farm. An expiration date on a VFD refers to the period of time you must obtain, feed and finish the duration of feeding dictated by the VFD. It is required for the veterinarian to send a copy of the VFD to the producer and feed manufacturer. You must retain the original; however, it can be digital. You must retain these records for 2 years. The state in which you are practicing may recommend record keeping, but the federal code of regulations surrounding regarding animal drugs, feeds and related products outlines these requirements.

## Conclusion

There are many drugs licensed for use in cattle production that require the oversight of a veterinarian through regulatory compliance with the Veterinary Feed Directive. While these can be challenging to master, veterinarians are an important tool for our clients for advising on judicious use, improving animal health, increasing production and sustainability across the industry.

## References

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