

FOUR STEPS POULTRY COMPANIES SHOULD TAKE NOW TO PREPARE FOR NEW VFD REGULATIONS

Poultry producers should be taking steps now to prepare for the new veterinary feed directive (VFD) regulations that kick in January 2017, advises Jon Schaeffer, DVM, PhD, director of poultry veterinary service, Zoetis.

1. Identify feed medications that will require a VFD. Schaeffer urges producers to talk with their veterinarians now as well as their nutritionists or medicated-feed additive (MFA) suppliers about how the regulations will affect their day-to-day feed management and other operations. “Don’t wait until the last minute,” he adds. “Review your current list of MFAs with them to see what might be affected.”
2. Consider a backup plan. “It’s not just a matter of knowing which medications require a VFD and which ones don’t,” the veterinarian says. “You also need to consider that some feed medications used for improving growth rate and feed conversion will no longer have these claims if they are classified as VFD drugs. Bacitracin and bambarmycins will be the only poultry MFAs with performance claims.”
3. Assign VFD leaders. Schaeffer recommends assigning at least one, or preferably several people, to be the poultry company’s VFD leaders. “These should be people who become knowledgeable about the regulations and keep up with new information on VFDs as it becomes available,” he says. “The leaders should be the go-to persons within the poultry company when a question about VFDs arise.”
4. Review recordkeeping procedures. Good recordkeeping will be essential to ensure compliance with FDA rules, Schaeffer adds. For example, producers and distributors will have to keep electronic or hard copies of VFDs on file for 2 years. Veterinarians are required to hold on to the originals for the same time period. “Consider if and how your company’s recordkeeping and document flow will need to be modified and, if changes will be needed, start putting a plan into place now,” Schaeffer advises.

