

Relationship With Veterinarian Is Key In New FDA Feed Directive

Huron, SD - The U.S. Food and Drug Administration's new "Veterinary Feed Directive" is changing how livestock producers handle medicated feed and is requiring more formality in the producer-veterinarian relationship.

"Having a good veterinarian for your livestock has always been important, but these new FDA regulations make it even more so," said Wanda Blair, who raises Angus cattle and bulls with her husband Ed as part of Blair Brothers Angus northeast of Sturgis, S.D. "I would really encourage farmers and ranchers who use medicated feed to establish and uphold an excellent relationship with their vet. The Veterinary Feed Directive is going to mean more interaction and record-keeping with your vet's office."

Blair, who serves as Vice President of the South Dakota Farm Bureau, recently attended an information session in Rapid City hosted by Farm Foundation, NFP. The meeting, held on Oct. 13, was designed for livestock producers, feed suppliers and

veterinarians to learn about and discuss the ramifications of the new FDA regulations.

The FDA's Veterinary Feed Directive rules went into effect on Oct. 1, although manufacturers are expected to make the required label changes right before the full implementation date of Dec. 31, 2016. By then they will need to remove the label indications for the use of feed-grade antibiotics for growth promotion and feed efficiency. Since extra-label use of feed-grade antibiotics in food animals is illegal, these uses will no longer be allowed.

Now a Veterinary Feed Directive (VFD), much like a prescription, will need to be written by a veterinarian who is licensed in the state where the animals are present. In addition, a valid veterinary-client-patient relationship (VCPR) will be required between the livestock operation and the vet.

Scott VanderWal, president of the South Dakota Farm Bureau, feeds cattle with his family as part of their row-crop farm north of Volga. He encourages

producers to talk to their veterinarian about how these regulations will change the protocols for using the products now termed "medically important" by the FDA.

"This new FDA rule is changing some things for us as producers, like the forms we have to file and the steps we have to take before getting certain products, but the most important aspect is not changing - and that is the care we take to ensure the health of our livestock. That is always top of mind for us in animal agriculture, and there's no one better to partner with on those health decisions than your trusted veterinarian," VanderWal added.

Livestock producers can visit www.fda.gov and search "VFD" to find more information about the new rules. Also, Dr. Dustin Oedekoven, State Veterinarian, will be one of the featured speakers during South Dakota Farm Bureau's annual meeting, set for Nov. 20-21 in Pierre. FDA's new Veterinary Feed Directive will be one of the topics discussed.

Task Force Makes Progress On New River Basin Districts

BY BOB MERCER
STATE CAPITOL BUREAU

PIERRE - The Legislature's task force reached agreements Friday on setting boundaries for South Dakota's new river basin natural resources districts.

The panel made one specific change merging a piece of one district into three other districts and adopted a general principal for setting the borders between districts.

The river basin districts would cover all of South Dakota and each would have a council to develop a water management plan for its area. The concept is better management of water issues across county lines and throughout an entire watershed.

South Dakota already has a variety of other types of political subdivisions dealing with water, such as water development districts for conservation, development and management of water resources along a specific river or region, and the statewide conservancy district for construction of water facilities.

The river-basin task force members on Friday recommended eliminating a long sliver of the Lower Missouri district in southeastern-most South Dakota.

That segment would be added instead into the adjacent James, Vermillion and Big Sioux districts where those three watersheds reach the Missouri River.

Borders between districts should be based on townships rather than census blocks, the panel

also decided.

A township that covers multiple watersheds will be assigned as a whole to the district for the watershed that contains more than 50 percent of the township.

Dave Ortbahn, a senior analyst for the Legislative Research Council, presented the first drafts of maps for the nine districts. He said the agency's mapping software broke down before he could complete the work.

He suggested using townships.

"That's going to be a lot easier to describe in statute where the boundaries are," Ortbahn said. "It will also help out on the voting districts. Most voting districts are based on townships."

The Legislature established the system of river basin natural resource districts during the 2015 session.

But to get the concept into law, legislators removed many specifics, such as taxing authority and the number of elected representatives on each district's council.

Developing those details will be the task force's role instead. Its eight members will serve as a sounding board and as a liaison to the Legislature through the end of 2018.

The council members would be elected for the first time in 2018.

The immediate work for the task force is fine-tuning the boundaries for the nine districts, creating three sub-districts "nearly equal" in population within each district, and recommending how many voting representatives should be elected from each sub-district to that district's

council.

Six council members was the opening suggestion Friday from former Rep. Kim Vanneman, R-Ideal. She said each district's citizens might have their own ideas in the months ahead about the number needed for their watershed.

Vanneman served on the original task force that developed the legislation during the past few years. She is chairwoman for the current task force.

Ortbahn said he plans to ask the Secretary of State election staff to review the final draft of the map.

"That's a really good idea," Vanneman said. "That is a big part of it. We all have to work together and make this happen."

The township approach can be successful, according to Jay Gilbertson of Brookings. He is executive director for the East Dakota Water Development District.

"We've used it since the late fifties (1950s). It seems to work," Gilbertson said.

The new state law also calls for a pilot project to be conducted in northeastern South Dakota for the Red and Minnesota rivers watershed. Still unclear is what that might be. The task force meets for the final time this year Nov. 23 to review proposed legislation.

"If it's not going to happen, let's make that clear," Sen. Jason Frerichs, D-Wilmot, said about the Red-Minnesota rivers project.

Frerichs recommended bringing a Nebraska water expert to meet with the task force and suggested working with the Red River Basin commission from North Dakota, Manitoba and Minnesota.

Animal Shelter To Host November Gala

Heartland Humane Society will host its annual Wine & Whiskers gala Nov. 14 from 6-9:30 p.m. at Minervas Event Center. The event will include wine tasting, a three-course plated meal, a large silent and live auction, merchandise, and raffles including a chance to win \$750.

Tickets are currently on sale and can be reserved by calling 605.664.4244 or online at www.heartlandhumanesociety.net. Seating is reserved to 300.

"Community support is vital to our success and Wine & Whiskers is one example of Heartland asking donors to come together and celebrate responsible animal care in our communities," Heartland's director Kerry Hacecky said.

Returning events for the evening include the handmade mittens, dessert dash and paw draw. Hacecky said guests will notice new raffles, merchandise, and schedule for the evening events. New items will include a chance to win one live auction package, a formal meal, and a new line of merchandise.

Top auction items at the gala include NASCAR and Walt Disney World tickets, artwork by Oscar Howe and Scott Luken, and several social packages including bourbon tasting and a Chilean meal.

To learn more about Wine and Whiskers, go online at www.heartlandhumanesociety.net/events or search "Wine and Whiskers" on Facebook.

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