

To ensure a safe food supply, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) oversees the use of animal medications. Some medications have been approved for use without a veterinarian's permission, while others require permission. Recently, the FDA changed how some antibiotic medications, which are important to human medicine, are used for animal feed. Since January 1, 2017, these medications require a Veterinary Feed Directive (VFD) order to be used in a medicated feed.

**What is a medicated feed and why is it used?**

Medicated feed is feed with a specific drug added to it. Medicated feed is fed to animals to prevent illness or treat an animal when it is sick. Medicated feeds are just one of the good animal care and well-being practices farmers and animal owners use to keep their animals healthy.

**Is all feed medicated?**

No, when you purchase feed, you have the option to buy feed without medications mixed into it.

**Who is impacted by these changes?**

Livestock owners, including youth with animal projects, who have decided to feed their animals medicated feeds.



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For more information on the Veterinary Feed Directive, visit:

[www.state.nj.us/agriculture/divisions/md/](http://www.state.nj.us/agriculture/divisions/md/)

# Antibiotics in Feed



## Livestock Owners Guide to the Veterinary Feed Directive

## What does VFD stand for?

Veterinary Feed Directive

## What is a VFD drug and why did the FDA change their process?

A VFD drug is an antibiotic used for both human and animal medicine. It's important these drugs are used correctly. The FDA's job is to ensure these drugs are used properly which is why they are requiring a VFD order for some medicated feed, which began January 1, 2017.

## Are all antibiotics affected?

No, not all antibiotics will be considered VFD drugs. The use of injectable antibiotics will not be affected; and some drugs used in water will now require a prescription from a veterinarian.

## How does a VFD order work?

A VFD order is similar to a prescription you would get from your human doctor, however a veterinarian will be giving you a VFD order for a medicated feed.

## How do you get a VFD order?

To get a VFD order, you must have an established veterinarian-client-patient relationship (VCPR) with a veterinarian. A VCPR is a working relationship between a veterinarian and a person who raises livestock (client). The veterinarian's primary role is to help and advise the client in determining which medications are appropriate for their animals (the patients).



Medicated feed labels will always indicate what animals are allowed to have the feed.

This drug ingredient requires a VFD order from your veterinarian.

VFD drugs will always have this statement on the label.

### Sample Feed Label

Medicated- Complete Turkey Starter  
For control of infectious synovitis caused by *Mycoplasma synoviae*

Active Drug Ingredient-  
Oxytetracycline.....0.022%

Guaranteed Analysis-  
Crude Protein, min..... 20.0%  
Lysine, min.....1.2%  
Methionine, min.....0.57%  
Crude Fat, min.....3.0%  
Crude Fiber, min.....4.0%  
Calcium, min.....0.8%  
Calcium, max.....1.3%  
Phosphorus, min.....0.65%  
Salt, min.....0.2%  
Salt, max.....0.7%

Ingredients- Grain products, plant protein products, processed grain by-products, monocalcium phosphate, dicalcium phosphate, calcium carbonate, salt, vegetable oil, choline chloride, natural flavors, roughage products, selenium yeast, manganous oxide, ferrous sulfate, zinc oxide, vitamin D supplement, mineral oil

Feeding Directions- Feed as a sole ration to turkeys from 10 weeks of age until market age. Provide a constant supply of clean, fresh water.

Warning- This product has been formulated specifically for poultry and is not intended for other species. WITHDRAW 5 DAYS BEFORE SLAUGHTER. DO NOT ADMINISTER TO TURKEYS PRODUCING EGGS FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION.

Caution: Federal law restricts medicated feed containing this VFD drug to use by or on the order of a licensed veterinarian.

## How do you know if you need a VFD order?

As seen in the example, feed labels of VFD drugs have the following statement: "Caution: Federal law restricts medicated feed containing this VFD drug to use by or on the order of a licensed veterinarian."

## What are examples of medications that will require a VFD order?

Examples of feed-grade medications moving to VFD drug status are chlortetracycline, tylosin and penicillin. The list can be found at [www.state.nj.us/agriculture/divisions/md/](http://www.state.nj.us/agriculture/divisions/md/)

## Where can I buy feed with my VFD order?

You can buy VFD feeds at any mill, retailer or other establishment listed as a distributor or manufacturer with the FDA. The list can be found at [www.state.nj.us/agriculture/divisions/md/](http://www.state.nj.us/agriculture/divisions/md/). If you are purchasing feed that requires a VFD order, you will need to present the VFD order before purchase.

## How do feed stores check for VFD orders?

Previously, VFD feeds were purchased without documentation at your feed store or mill. However, since January 1, 2017, you must first present a VFD order, written by a veterinarian, to purchase VFD feeds.

## What records will I need to keep?

Records will need to be kept by the livestock owner, veterinarian and feed sales company for two years. The original VFD order will be kept by the veterinarian. The livestock owner and feed mill must also keep copies on file.

**Many over-the-counter feed-grade antibiotics were moved to VFD status on January 1, 2017.**