



## The elimination of livestock over the counter antibiotics – Federal Drug Administration Guidance #263

By: Beth De Lair, Ag & Natural Resources Coordinator



This year, on June 13th, 2023, the Federal Drug Administration (FDA) will enact guidance #263. This ruling will stop all sales of over the counter (OTC) livestock antibiotics in the United States. This is a big change for any sized livestock operation and is something every producer and animal owner needs to prepare for. The official guidance reads as, “medically important antimicrobial drugs that are available OTC and approved for use in animals (companion and food producing), regardless of delivery mechanism, be voluntarily brought under veterinary oversight or prescription marketing status.” The word voluntarily and guidance in this ruling does not apply to consumers but to the drug companies that are making these antibiotics. This language allows the FDA to work with the drug companies to help them voluntarily change the marketing status of their medically important livestock antibiotics to a prescription required item. The ruling is attempting to decrease antibiotic resistance in bacteria due to misuse of antibiotics. To read the full report from the FDA you can click [here](#).

### What does this mean for livestock owners?

On June 13th, 2023, all current over the counter livestock antibiotics, regardless of method of injection, will be pulled from every feed store in the United States. You will be required to consult a large animal veterinarian to get a prescription for the medications you are requesting. Further follow up will be at the discretion of each veterinarian.

### What can do producers do now?

Establish a veterinary client patient relationship (VCPR) which is the basis for veterinary care. This means you need to chat with your large animal vet about what diseases you know come up in your operation and what medications you will need as the year continues forward. Your vet will then need to prescribe you the necessary medications. Also be sure to talk to your friends and neighbors about these new rules so they can prepare their management decisions appropriately. This is not meant to blindside any producer but without communities sharing this information it could easily create that feeling.

### What should someone *not* do?

Do not panic or stock up on any currently available medications as they can expire and lose their effectiveness in treating diseases.

### Where will I be able to purchase the antibiotics?

There is no one answer to this question. The ruling states that any recognized farm store such as a co-op, Tractor Supply, or other similar store has the option of being a pharmacy where livestock owners could bring in their prescription from a veterinarian and purchase the required drugs. However, the liability of being a pharmacy could greatly impact any feed store whether they are a national brand or a community owned business. It will be up to each store to decide how they would like to proceed, and at this time, no stores have made it public knowledge what their status will be regarding this new guidance. Online stores are also subject to complying with federal rulings and you will not be able to purchase these items online unless the retailer is in coordination with the veterinarian, or their office, that wrote the prescription.

### Will these changes lead to additional expenses?

At this time, it is unknown if the changes will affect antibiotic prices. However, there are veterinary expenses associated with establishing and maintaining a VCPR. If you are currently in good standing with a local vet, then your odds of having additional expenses due to this federal change are expected to be minimal.

### What information is available from Colorado State University Extension?

Colorado State University Extension is planning to host a free educational webinar with Veterinary Extension Specialist, Ragan Adams on Monday, February 6th at noon mountain time that will cover this topic in more detail. This webinar will be open to everyone to attend. You will be able to send in questions regarding this topic to Beth De Lair the Pueblo County Extension Agriculture and Natural Resource Coordinator at [delairb@pueblounty.us](mailto:delairb@pueblounty.us).

To register for this event you can go to: <https://OTCLivestockantibioticslaws23.eventbrite.com> or call 719-583-6566.

For additional information on this ruling here are some helpful sites you can go to:

#### Texas Farm Bureau – Ranchers Should Prepare Now

<https://texasfarmbureau.org/ranchers-should-prepare-now-for-2023-animal-antibiotic-guidelines/>

#### Guidance for Industry No. 263 Missouri Extension

<https://extension.missouri.edu/publications/g2112>

#### Complete List of antibiotics affected by GFI #263

<https://extension.missouri.edu/media/wysiwyg/Extensiondata/Pub/docs/g02112-Antibiotics-impacted-by-GFI263.pdf>

#### FDA’s Frequently Asked Questions for Farmers & Ranchers

<https://www.fda.gov/animal-veterinary/unpublished-judicious-use-antimicrobials/gfi-263-frequently-asked-questions-farmers-and-ranchers>

#### FDA Guidance for Industry #263

<https://www.fda.gov/regulatory-information/search-fda-guidance-documents/cvm-gfi-263-recommendations-sponsors-medically-important-antimicrobial-drugs-approved-use-animals>

