



Simmentals at Tama

Lot 288

March son of MCM Top Grade 018Z
BW: 91 • ADG: 4.18 • WDA: 3.11
CE 8.3 BW .9 WW 63.6 YW 97.7

Lot 289

March son of Schlesselman Bull
178Z
BW: 87 • ADG: 4.30 • WDA: 3.16
CE 9 BW -2.1 WW 47.7 YW 65.6

Heifer Lots 432-434

Sired by HS/DSS Avenger A37P
Avg. BW 85 • Avg ADG 2.92
Avg. WDA 2.98 • Avg Int. Wt. 957

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VET'S VIEW

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How will the Veterinary Feed Directive affect Beef Cattle Production?

New antibiotic regulations explained

In the January article we covered some the background that led to the current Veterinary Feed Directive (VFD) (antibiotic regulations) situation. This article will cover the impact that the changes in FDA policy will have on your beef cattle operation.

The first principal that the FDA is implementing is to remove growth promotion claims from antibiotics that are considered important for human medicine. In reality, this principal will have limited impact on beef cattle production. Very few of the feed grade antibiotics (considered medically important) used in beef production are used to enhance growth. The ionophores (Rumensin and Bovatec) are not medically important so we are not losing the ability to use these for increased feed efficiency.

The second principal that the FDA is implementing, the veterinary oversight requirement, will have some impact on beef production. As of January 1, 2017 all of the medically important feed medications, such as tetracycline and tylosin, will no longer be available as over-the-counter (OTC) medications. Therefore, in order to use medicated feed with medically important antibiotics in it you will need a Veterinary Feed Directive (VFD) to purchase the feed. Prior to January 1, 2017 you should have a discussion with your veterinarian and feed supplier to make sure that everything is properly in place so that there are not any disruptions in your ability to properly care for your cattle.

Although the VFD process has been around 20 years, veterinarians and feed distributors have not used them in the quantity that we will at the beginning of the New Year.

There may be some delays and growing pains the first few months, so it will be better if you can get as much as possible in place beforehand. The specific feed medication you need and what you will be using it for will determine how the VFD may be written to best suit your needs. For example, a feedlot that is planning on continuously feeding Tylan to prevent liver abscesses will be different than a cow-calf operation that needs to feed CTC in the fly season to control Anaplasmosis.

Where you are able to buy some medicated feeds may change also. A feed retailer can only sell VFD feeds if they have filled out the proper paperwork with the FDA. Some smaller local feed distributors/retailers or chain stores may not want to go through the process and invite increased FDA oversight into their business. The availability to buy medicated feeds such as medicated milk replacer, complete feeds used for 4H projects, etc. may be reduced in some areas.

I encourage you attend a VFD meeting sometime in the next 6 months to make sure you have a firm understanding of all the ramifications. Many pharmaceutical and feed companies are sponsoring VFD meetings. Additionally, look for informational meetings offered by ISU Extension, Iowa Farm Bureau, and Iowa Cattleman's Association. Additionally, keep track of your feed medication usage this year so that you know in advance when you will need a VFD in place next year to minimize any problems that may arise. The next article in this series will address how the VFD process works.

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