

**News From Your County Agent**  
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**Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service**  
**Zavala County**

Looks like spring has officially arrived to our area, perhaps a little early but when mesquite trees are greening up, black brush is in full bloom, twisted acacia(hichacillo) is displaying its colors and wildflowers are starting to bloom it is safe to say that spring is here. The old saying about April showers bring May flowers does not apply to our area, its more like February sprinkles bring March flowers. For those of you who have contacted our office to ask if it is safe to bring out all the cold sensitive plants and put them out safely the answer is yes, there will NOT be another freeze this year until December(maybe). Thank you for reading this week.

**New Regulations Regarding Antibiotic Use in Animal Feed Coming in January**

According to the Federal Drug Administration(FDA) a major change is coming on January 1, 2017, for the judicious use of antimicrobials in medicated feed for food animals (such as livestock, poultry, and aquaculture). These changes mean some antimicrobial drugs used in medicated feed will change from over-the-counter (OTC) drugs to veterinary feed directive (VFD) drugs. To use a VFD drug in medicated feed the animal producer needs an order from a veterinarian. That order is called a veterinary feed directive (VFD). The FDA recently revised the rule for the authorization, manufacturing, distribution, and use of VFD drugs and VFD medicated feed. This rule impacts: veterinarians; the distributors of the VFD feed such as commercial feed mills or feed retailers; and the animal producers who are referred to in the rule as clients.

As your county Extension agent I am here to help you as an animal producer to comply with the revised rule. In addition, I am becoming knowledgeable on this issue so that I can provide information about the changes for certain antimicrobial drugs used in medicated feed and the VFD requirements, and I will be an important partner in FDA's strategy to promote the judicious use of antimicrobials in food-producing animals through educational programs and the utilization of the news media and Extension industry newsletters.

FDA's strategy to promote the judicious use of antimicrobials in food-producing animals will bring the use of certain drugs under veterinary supervision so they are used only when necessary for animal health. The VFD final rule outlines the process for authorizing use of VFD drugs (which are animal drugs intended for use in or on animal feed that require the supervision of a licensed veterinarian) and provides veterinarians in all states with a framework for authorizing the use of medically important antimicrobials in feed when needed for specific animal health purposes. In addition to the rule's impact on medicated feed, affected water-soluble drugs will change from OTC status to prescription status. If you would like to learn more about this new rule go to the following link which will take you to CVM's VFD webpage:

<http://www.fda.gov/AnimalVeterinary/DevelopmentApprovalProcess/ucm071807.htm>

For VFD questions and answers, please see:

<http://www.fda.gov/downloads/AnimalVeterinary/GuidanceComplianceEnforcement/GuidanceforIndustry/UCM052660.pdf>.

If you need information about drugs transitioning from Over-the-Counter (OTC) to Veterinary Feed Directive (VFD) Status, please see:

<http://www.fda.gov/animalveterinary/developmentapprovalprocess/ucm482107.htm>

And for questions and answers about the VFD form common format, please see:

<http://www.fda.gov/downloads/AnimalVeterinary/GuidanceComplianceEnforcement/GuidanceforIndustry/UCM474640.pdf>. Should you have questions or would like to talk with someone about this rule please contact [AskCVM@fda.hhs.gov](mailto:AskCVM@fda.hhs.gov). I will continue to bring you updates on this topic as they become available but I wanted to be sure you are in the forefront of this information.

### **According To Recent Reports-COOL is Officially Dead**

When I first started informing you about COOL I also assured you that I would be providing you with updates on the controversial issue which was to affect the pork and beef industries. I am happy to inform you that the United States Department of Agriculture(USDA) has officially nixed the controversial country-of-origin meat labeling regulations for pork and beef. The battle over COOL between the U.S. and its North American neighbors came to a head in early December after the World Trade Organization ruled Canada and Mexico could impose tariffs worth \$1 billion on U.S.-traded products as retaliation over COOL.

Congress went on to repeal COOL in mid December before these retaliations could take place. The USDA stopped enforcing COOL requirements for beef and pork in mid-December. Now, according to Tuesday's announcement, the final rule has officially eliminated COOL regulations from beef and pork, including muscle cuts, ground beef and ground pork. COOL is a labeling law that for marketing purposes requires retailers to provide their customers with information regarding the country of origin of regulated commodities. AMS is responsible for the administration and enforcement of COOL regulations.

Under this final rule, beef and pork muscle cuts and ground beef and pork are removed from the list of covered commodities subject to the COOL regulation. Retailers are no longer required to provide this information for beef and pork at the point of sale. COOL regulatory requirements for chicken, lamb, goat, farm-raised and wild caught fish and shellfish, perishable agricultural commodities, peanuts, pecans, macadamia nuts, and ginseng are still in effect. All imported and domestic meat products continue to be subject to rigorous inspections by USDA to ensure food safety. The final rule was published in the *Federal Register* last week on March 2, 2016, and is effective upon publication. For additional information, contact AMS by phone at (202) 720-4486 or send an email to: [cool@ams.usda.gov](mailto:cool@ams.usda.gov).

### **Tip of the Week: Need A Summer Camp For Your Youngster-Try The Wildlife Brigades**

The March 15 registration deadline for the Texas Brigades wildlife leadership camps conducted by the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service is fast approaching so you will have to act fast if you decide to have your youngsters attend. This summer will mark 24 years that the camps have been honing young leaders through the Texas Brigades curriculum, which is the whole goal of the camps, to empower young people with the confidence and skills needed to assume professional leadership roles in the future.

While the camps feature quail, deer, bass, redfish, ducks and livestock, the aim is to equip young

people with the resources and determination needed to really make a difference in wildlife conservation and proper land stewardship throughout their lives. All the camps which are held at various locations across the state share the focus of teaching youth leadership skills, natural resources conservation and proper land management. Each camp is limited to 20-30 students ages 13 through 17. The camps are designed to develop such life skills as critical thinking and team building through fun and interesting activities surrounding the particular camp's species of wildlife, fisheries or livestock. A "Coastal Brigade" is the latest camp offering. It will feature conservation issues associated with the Texas Gulf Coast.

The camp dates and locations are:

- Rolling Plains Bobwhite Brigade, Centennial Lodge, Coleman, June 11-15.
- South Texas Buckskin Brigade, Southern Star Ranch, Zavala/Uvalde, June 12-16.
- South Texas Bobwhite Brigade, Buck Horn Creek Ranch, McCoy, June 24-28.
- Bass Brigade, Warren Ranch, Santa Anna, July 6-10.
- Waterfowl Brigade, Big Woods on the Trinity, Tennessee Colony, July 17-21.
- Ranch Brigade, Warren Ranch, July 18-22.
- North Texas Buckskin Brigade, Warren Ranch, July 24-28.
- Coastal Brigade, Sea Scout Base, Galveston, July 26-30.

The camps are all partnership efforts of The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, Texas Wildlife Association, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service and Texas Trophy Hunters Association, along with several universities, conservation groups, local soil and water conservation districts, private businesses and individuals with an interest in wildlife and youth leadership development. Tuition is \$500 per cadet per camp, but sponsors are available to provide financial aid when requested. Aimee Carrasco, Texas Brigades executive director at San Antonio, has informed the public that camp organizers are looking for adult leaders to help at all the camps. Adults interested in working with the Texas Brigades program should be highly motivated, preferably over 21 years old and willing to serve as "covey," "school," "herd," or "flock" leaders. Applications may be completed online or downloaded at <http://www.texasbrigades.org>. For more information, contact Carrasco at [acarrasco@texasbrigades.org](mailto:acarrasco@texasbrigades.org) or call 855-892-7447 or the Zavala County office of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service. Have a great week. M.V.

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