

AQUA NEWS

NEW IDEAS FOR FISH HEALTH AND PERFORMANCE

No Order Too Small

Establishing feed distributorship eases VFD process for fish farmers

KEY POINTS

- VFD drugs have created some challenges to feed companies and growers needing small batches of medicated feed.
- One solution is to establish a feed distributorship, which allows you to receive medicated feed directly from the mill and then deliver it to fish-culture facilities.
- You must notify FDA of your intent to become a feed distributorship for VFD feeds and develop an agreement with a feed company.

Recent approvals for AQUAFLO[®] (florfenicol) for use in catfish and freshwater-reared salmonids have provided much-needed antimicrobial treatments for salmonid and catfish producers, according to Steve Sharon, Fish Culture Supervisor, Wyoming Game and Fish Department.

However, the Veterinary Feed Directive (VFD) drug classification for AQUAFLO mandated by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has also created some challenges to feed companies and growers, particularly when only small batches of medicated feed are required.

“Fortunately, the vast majority of prescribed VFDs typically deal in tons of feed shipped and can easily be filled directly by the feed company,” Sharon explains. “However, the requirement for a feed mill to receive a VFD directly from a veterinarian prior to shipment in a specific prescribed amount can be very problematic if the infected fish lot is small in number, or if the feed poundage prescribed does not fit within 40- to 50-pound increments that a feed company typically ships.”

For example, the first VFD order for the Wyoming Game and Fish Department involved bacterial coldwater disease in a very small, but extremely valuable, brood-recruitment lot of

cutthroat trout. The entire 10-day treatment called for a total of 6 pounds of medicated feed. Since the prescribed amount was well below 50 pounds, the department could not receive feed directly from the mill.

40- or 50-pound increments

After consulting with FDA and the local feed company, the Wyoming Game and Fish Department established its own feed distributorship, which allows the state agency to receive medicated feed directly from the mill and then deliver it to its fish-culture facilities as ordered by a veterinarian through a VFD.

Under this arrangement, either a company or a wildlife agency can receive fish feed in 40- or 50-pound increments as a feed distributor without the requirement of a VFD order. In turn, the feed distributor can maintain a feed inventory and distribute the exact prescribed

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amount to a fish-culture facility upon receiving a VFD.

According to Sharon, this arrangement has allowed them to fulfill small VFD orders, keep VFD feeds on hand for cyclical fish-health issues and deliver feed quickly to a fish-culture facility after receiving a VFD.

Develop an agreement

To become a feed distributor, a company or wildlife agency must notify FDA of its intent to become a feed distributorship for VFD feeds and must develop an agreement with a feed company to become a VFD feed distributor as regulated by federal law, Sharon says.

It also must establish the feed-distribution point at a location where fish are not reared. The distributor can then ship VFD-medicated feed to another feed distributorship without a VFD order. The distributor must maintain inventory control, a copy of the VFDs, and supporting documentation for a minimum of 2 years.

As with any VFD drug, Sharon explains, it is extremely important to have a strong veterinarian-client-patient relationship to maintain an effective treatment protocol.

“The development of a feed distributorship provides an opportunity to allocate specific feed amounts in a short time frame that cannot always be accomplished by a feed mill,” he says.

“Also, the opportunity to network with other feed distributors to consolidate or utilize inventories can shorten delivery time if medicated feed is not readily available from a feed mill. A feed distributorship has enhanced our capacity to treat any given fish lot, regardless of its number, and has shortened response time on several treatments over the summer.”

For further information on VFD procedures and AQUAFLO, go to www.AQUAFLO-USA.COM.

CAUTION: Federal law restricts medicated feed containing this veterinary feed directive (VFD) drug to use by or on the order of a licensed veterinarian.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CALL
1.800.521.5767 OR GO TO
www.AQUAFLO-USA.COM

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