

ELANCO

Optaflexx™



Finishing  
Improvement  
Technologies™

## Show Animal Guidelines

**Elanco Animal Health supports only the authorized use of Optaflexx™; therefore, the product must be used solely in accordance with the FDA-approved label.**

### Proper Use of Animal Health Products

Elanco Animal Health encourages show organizations and leaders to ensure all animal health products are used according to label instructions.

- Mix and handle products properly and according to label.
- Administer products at the proper rates.
- Administer products during the proper phase of growth.
- Use only those products approved for the species being shown.
- When using products, maintain proper nutrition and animal management practices.
- Consult professional experts regarding the proper use of products.

### Using Optaflexx in Show Steers or Market Heifers

Optaflexx is a new cattle feed ingredient from Elanco Animal Health. When fed to cattle in the final stage of the finishing period, Optaflexx increases live weight gain, improves feed efficiency and increases red meat yield, while maintaining beef's natural taste, tenderness and juiciness. It's the only product of its type approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for use in cattle being fed in confinement for slaughter. The following Q&A provides some basic information and guidance for 4-H and FFA members on the correct use of Optaflexx in beef cattle.

### What are the approved levels of Optaflexx for cattle?

**A:** Optaflexx is approved for feeding during the last 28 to 42 days of the finishing period.

Indications	Appropriate Concentration of Optaflexx in Type C Medicated Feed	Optaflexx (mg/hd/d)
Increased rate of weight gain and improved feed efficiency	8.2 to 24.6 g/ton (90% dry matter basis) 9.1 to 27.3 g/ton (100% dry matter basis)	70-430
Increased rate of weight gain, improved feed efficiency and increased carcass leanness	9.8 to 24.6 g/ton (90% dry matter basis) 10.9 to 27.3 g/ton (100% dry matter basis)	90-430

Feeding Optaflexx outside of these FDA-approved ranges is illegal.

### When should I feed Optaflexx?

**A:** Optaflexx is approved for use only during the final 28 to 42 days prior to harvest. Optaflexx should only be fed during this period of time. Optimal efficacy of the product has been demonstrated when cattle are fed Optaflexx between 28 and 35 days prior to harvest. The response to feeding Optaflexx diminishes when it is fed beyond 42 days.



### **Why is Optaflexx only recommended late in the finishing stage of a steer or market heifer?**

**A:** As beef cattle move toward biological maturity, the composition of gain begins to shift from muscle growth to fat deposition. Fat contains much higher caloric density per pound than muscle, so it requires more nutrients (energy) to produce it. This higher nutrient requirement means less efficient beef production during this phase of finishing. Optaflexx helps maintain a composition of gain more typical of an animal earlier in its finishing phase. More of the nutrients are directed toward muscle development, without impacting the degree of marbling. Optaflexx extends the period of more efficient meat production, which results in more live weight gain, carcass weight gain and red meat yield.

### **How does Optaflexx work?**

**A:** Optaflexx (ractopamine hydrochloride) is a beta-agonist and a member of the class of compounds called phenethanolamines. Optaflexx stimulates beta-receptors on cell surfaces. These receptors are present in both skeletal muscle and adipose tissue. The primary effect of Optaflexx is to increase the size of the muscle fibers by directing nutrients to increase protein synthesis. Optaflexx has minimal effects on fat metabolism.

### **How is Optaflexx different from other beta-agonists such as clenbuterol?**

**A:** Optaflexx's unique structure and biological properties make it different from other beta-agonists. Clenbuterol is banned for use in food animals because of human safety concerns. Optaflexx is approved by the FDA for use in cattle and meets FDA's stringent animal, environmental and food safety standards.

### **What happens if Optaflexx is fed longer than 42 days?**

**A:** Optaflexx is approved to be fed during the final 28 to 42 days of the finishing period. Because the response to Optaflexx diminishes after longer periods of feeding, there will likely be

diminishing benefits for your continued investment if you feed Optaflexx for more than 42 days. Consequently, you should not feed Optaflexx for more than 42 days.

### **What response can I expect from feeding Optaflexx?\***

**A:** When fed to steers during the last 28 to 42 days of the finishing period, Optaflexx:

- Improves live weight gain by 10 to 21 lbs
- Increases hot carcass weight by 6 to 18 lbs
- Improves feed efficiency by 14 to 21 percent

### **How will Optaflexx affect carcass conformation?\***

**A:** When fed to steers during the last 28 to 42 days of the finishing period, Optaflexx:

- Increases dressing percentage up to 0.4 percent
- Increases ribeye area up to 0.5 sq in
- Has no effect on 12th rib fat thickness
- Does not affect carcass marbling score

### **Is Optaflexx safe?**

**A:** Yes. Optaflexx meets the FDA's stringent animal, environmental and food safety standards.

### **Is there a withdrawal period required when feeding Optaflexx?**

**A:** There is no withdrawal period for Optaflexx.

### **If Optaflexx works well in cattle and is safe, is it acceptable for use in other show animal species?**

**A:** Optaflexx is approved by the FDA for use in cattle only. It is NOT approved for use in any other species. It is illegal to use Optaflexx in any species other than cattle.

\*Based upon a summary of the Elanco Animal Health Optaflexx Core Data Set

**Can Optaflexx (ractopamine hydrochloride) be detected in the feed or in urine, blood or tissue samples from cattle?**

**A:** Yes.

**Can Optaflexx and other compounds such as clenbuterol be differentiated with testing of urine, blood or tissues?**

**A:** Yes.

**Are there assays available to detect ractopamine in show animals?**

- A:**
- There are several assays commercially available for ractopamine screening in live animals. The USDA also screens for the presence of ractopamine in tissues.
  - These assays allow ractopamine to be differentiated from other beta-agonists, such as clenbuterol and salbutamol.
  - If an assay is positive, you should always follow up with confirmatory assays.

**How do I have feed, urine or tissue samples analyzed for ractopamine?**

- A:**
- Ractopamine assay procedures for feed and tissues are available from the FDA under the Freedom of Information Act.
  - The USDA and some commercial, state and university laboratories can screen for and confirm the presence of ractopamine in feed, urine and tissues.
  - Elanco will assist those laboratories interested in developing analytical methods for ractopamine.
  - For more information, contact Elanco at 1-800-428-4441.

**What is the difference between Paylean® and Optaflexx?**

**A:** Optaflexx is approved by the FDA for use in cattle only, while Paylean is approved by the FDA for use in swine only. The concentrations of ractopamine hydrochloride in each of these products are different because feed additives are handled and formulated differently in each industry.

**Can I feed Optaflexx to my breeding heifers and bulls?**

**A:** No. Optaflexx is not approved for use in animals intended for breeding. The effects of feeding Optaflexx on reproduction have not been evaluated.

**When feeding Optaflexx, do I need to alter any nutrients in the diet?**

**A:** No ration changes are necessary. All rations fed during the Optaflexx research trials conducted by Elanco Animal Health were formulated with nutrient profiles typical of today's cattle finishing rations.

**Does Optaflexx have the same effect on different breed types and marketing weights?**

**A:** Elanco trials included cattle from a wide variety of breeds, including English, Continental and *bos indicus* crosses. All breed types responded to Optaflexx. To date, there have not been studies involving Holsteins or high-percentage Brahmans. Further, marketing weights in these trials ranged from 1,000 to more than 1,400 lbs per head. Cattle within this weight range yielded similar live and carcass weight effects.

**Where can I get more information on Optaflexx?**

**A:** Contact the Elanco technical services help line at 1-800-428-4441 or visit [www.optaflexx.com](http://www.optaflexx.com).

## Important:

Optaflexx must be thoroughly mixed into feeds before use. Always follow label directions. Store Optaflexx in a cool, dry place.

## Warning:

- The active ingredient in Optaflexx, ractopamine hydrochloride, is a beta-agonist. Individuals with cardiovascular disease should exercise caution to avoid exposure.
- Optaflexx is not for use in humans. Keep out of reach of children.
- When mixing and handling Optaflexx, use protective clothing, impervious gloves, protective eyewear and a NIOSH-approved dust mask. Operators should wash thoroughly with soap and water after handling. If accidental eye contact occurs, immediately rinse eyes thoroughly with water. If irritation persists, seek medical attention.
- The material safety data sheet (MSDS) contains more detailed safety information. The MSDS is available at [www.optaflexx.com](http://www.optaflexx.com).

**For additional product information or to report a suspected adverse event associated with the use of this product, call 1-800-428-4441.**



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