

News From Your County Agent
By Marcel Valdez, CEA-ANR
Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service
Zavala County

Well we finally got our first freeze of the year, approximately 17 days late according to the average first freeze date in Zavala county which is supposed to occur the first week of December. I hope all of you were able to enjoy the warm spring like temperatures we had on Saturday and then turn the page quickly to winter and endure a cold, cloudy and windy Sunday. The weather pattern we had over the course of 2 days(Saturday and Sunday) is a true example of South Texas Weather.....don't like the weather one day in Texas wait until the next day and it will change, is an old cliché on Texas weather and this weekend was no exception.

On behalf of the staff at the Zavala County office of Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, I want to wish all of you a very Happy and Merry Christmas on Sunday with friends and family. Best wishes to all of you and thank you for reading this week.

Final Reminder of Pesticide Applicator CEU Opportunity Next Week

This is our final reminder to all pesticide applicator license holders about the 12th annual Zavala County Pesticide applicators training opportunity which will take place next week on Wednesday December 28, 2016 at the La Pryor High School Auditorium in La Pryor Texas. This annual event is sponsored by the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, the La Pryor Independent School District in collaboration with the Texas Department of Agriculture and the Zavala County AgriLife Extension Service Leadership Advisory Board. Commercial, private and non-commercial pesticide applicator license holders will be able to obtain 6 CEU's at this event, 3 general, 1 laws and regulations, 1 in integrated pest management(IPM) and 1 in drift minimization. Registration will begin at 8:30 a.m. and the program will begin at 9:00 a.m. Private pesticide applicators are required to obtain 15 CEU's in 5 years to keep their license active while commercial, non-commercial applicator license holders must obtain 5 CEU's every year to keep their license valid. For more information about this event or if you plan to attend contact the Zavala County Office of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service at 830-374-2883 or by e-mail at mj-valdez@tamu.edu.

Animal Producers-Important Updates on VFD(Veterinary Feed Directive)

As of January 1, 2017, animal producers will not be able to purchase feeds over the counter that contain antimicrobials deemed important for human health. Instead, to buy and use feeds containing those antimicrobials, animal producers must be authorized by a licensed veterinarian who is operating under the Food and Drug Administration's revised Veterinary Feed Directive, or VFD, rule. The VFD rule has been in effect for 20 years, but it affected only a small number of producers and just a few antimicrobials. As of January 1, changes to the rule will mean that it will impact most animal producers and apply to many more antimicrobials.

The antimicrobials that will be covered by the VFD rule are considered "medically important," because they are important for human health. A list of medically important antimicrobials is in Appendix A of FDA's Guidance for Industry #152:

<http://www.fda.gov/downloads/AnimalVeterinary/GuidanceComplianceEnforcement/GuidanceforIndustry/UCM052519.pdf>. And, information on drugs transitioning from over-the-counter status to VFD status is available here:

<http://www.fda.gov/AnimalVeterinary/DevelopmentApprovalProcess/ucm482107.htm>.)

Also, after January 1, animal drug sponsors will have removed the claims of "growth promotion" and "feed efficiency" from the labels of medically important antimicrobials. Animal drug sponsors, in cooperation with

CVM, are currently changing the labels for their products so that production claims such as “growth promotion” or “feed efficiency” will be gone from labels, thus those uses will no longer be permitted. These changes will have a significant effect on the animal production industry. We believe that you, in your role as a County Agricultural Agent, can help animal producers learn about the changes and how to comply. Animal producers must have a VFD order – issued by a licensed veterinarian, operating under a veterinarian-client-patient relationship – to use a feed with a medically important antimicrobial. (To find out more about veterinary-client-patient relationships, see Guidance for Industry #120, which you can get to from the VFD page listed below.)

The feed distributor that the producer works with must receive the order before releasing the VFD feed to the animal producer. The veterinarian can, for example, give the producer a second copy of the order (one for the producer to keep, and one for the producer to give to the feed distributor), or the veterinarian could send the order directly to the feed distributor. The animal producer must use VFD feeds only in accordance with the VFD order. In other words, the producer can feed only those animals identified by the order, and only during the time period specified in the order. Feeding animals other than those specified in the VFD order or feeding them beyond the expiration date of the VFD order is considered an “extra-label” use of feed. That’s an illegal use. Once the order expires, if continued treatment is required, the animal producer must get a new VFD order from the veterinarian.

We understand that there are some questions concerning the use of antimicrobials in feed for show animals, including animals used in FFA and 4-H shows. Any animal producer in Zavala County have specific questions about the VFD rule and show animals, please send those questions to this e-mail address: AskCVM@fda.hhs.gov. Your questions will be promptly answered. The changes in the VFD rule will help FDA address the issue of antimicrobial resistance. In principle, giving antimicrobial drugs to food-producing animals at low levels for long periods of time and giving the antimicrobial drugs to large numbers of animals may contribute to the development of antibiotic resistance, which makes diseases caused by resistant bacteria more difficult to treat. Finding antimicrobials to treat a disease is far more difficult when the disease is caused by resistant bacteria.

A veterinarian’s involvement is important because veterinarians have the medical training necessary to diagnose the disease and to identify the appropriate antimicrobial for the specific situation. The veterinarian’s involvement will help to ensure judicious use of antimicrobials. Here’s how you can find out more about the VFD rule. More information, including brochures in both English and Spanish for producers, veterinarians, retailers, and distributors, is available on FDA’s VFD page: <http://www.fda.gov/animalveterinary/developmentapprovalprocess/ucm071807.htm>. (Information about the reasons for the change is in Food and Drug Administration Guidance for Industry #213, which you can find here <http://www.fda.gov/downloads/AnimalVeterinary/GuidanceComplianceEnforcement/GuidanceforIndustry/UCM299624.pdf>.) Should you have additional questions, please contact AskCVM@fda.hhs.gov. And, for other information about safe feed, please go to www.FDA.Gov/SafeFeed, a site maintained by CVM’s Animal Feed Safety System Team.

Tip of the Week: A Home Gardeners Christmas(Author Unknown)

'Twas the night before Christmas and all through the yard the branches were bare and the ground frozen hard(In Zavala County maybe cold ground).

The roses were dormant and mulched all around to protect them from damage if frost heaves the ground.

The perennials were nestled all snug in their beds while vision of 5 10 5(fertilizer) danced in their heads.

The new planted shrubs had been soaked by the hose to settle their roots for the long winter's doze.

And out on the lawn, the new fallen snow(Leaves in Zavala County) protected the roots of the grasses below.

When what to my wondering eyes should appear but a truck full of gifts of gardening gear.

Saint Nick was the driver, the jolly old elf, and he winked and he said, "I'm a gardener myself."

"I've brought wilt proof, rootone, and gibberlins too, father can try them and see what they do. To start new plants, a propagating kit, sparkling new shears for the old fig tree."

"To seed your new lawn, I've a patented sower, and in case it should grow, here's a new power mower. For the seed planting days I've a trowel and a dibble. And a row of wire mesh if the rabbits should nibble."

"For the feminine gardener, some gadgets she loves, plant stakes, a sprinkler and water proof gloves, a chemical agent for her compost pit and for PH detection a soil testing kit."

"With these colorful flagstones, lay a new garden path, for the kids to enjoy a bird feeder and bath. And last but not least, some well rotted manure! A Green Christmas year round, these gifts will insure."

Then Jolly Saint Nick, having emptied his load, started his truck and took to the road on old 83 and I heard him exclaim through the motor's loud hum

"Merry Christmas to all, and to all a green thumb!"

You may direct questions and inquiries to Marcel Valdez, County Extension Agent Agriculture and Natural Resources at (830) 374 2883 or by e mail to mj valdez@tamu.edu. We look forward to your questions, calls and e mails. May you have a week filled with joy, happiness for a very Merry Christmas. M.V.

December 19-23, 2016

The members of Texas A&M AgriLife will provide equal opportunities in programs and activities, education, and employment to all persons regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation or gender identity and will strive to achieve full and equal employment opportunity throughout Texas A&M AgriLife.