

Vets Learn More About Drug Labeling Rules

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LEESPORT (Berks Co.)—Veterinarians and field men from eight southeast Pennsylvania counties gathered at the Berks County Ag Center last week to learn more about drug labeling requirements.

The event was coordinated by Russel Rooks, the field man from Atlantic Dairy Cooperative, in response to various concerns about farm inspections and milk safety.

Paul Hoge, of the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, spent the evening explaining the Pasteurized Milk Ordinance regulations to 50 area vets in attendance.

According to Hoge, the drug labeling and storage requirements are in response to drug residues found in samples of retail milk. "In March of 1988, the FDA's regional milk specialists collected 49 samples from 10 U.S. cities. Thirty-six samples showed the presence of sulfamethazine," Hoge said.

According to the FDA publication, "Special Problems in Milk Protection," sulfamethazine (SMZ) in moderate to high concentrations appears to cause thyroid tumors in rats and mice. SMZ residues in milk can also cause allergic reactions in some people.

Of the 36 samples SMZ residues, 10 percent were above 10 parts per billion, the action level determined by the FDA.

The FDA, with the help of the National Conference for Interstate Milk Shipments, gathered more data to determine the extent of the problem. By the end of January, 4,887 samples from 48 states had been analyzed. Approximately five percent had tested positive for SMZ. Only one percent were above 10 ppb.

This report followed behind a "Wall Street journal" article that reported 38 percent of 50 retail milk samples taken from a 10-city area had SMZ residues. Dr. Stanley Katz of Rutgers University did the research for the newspaper using the Charm II method. The FDA was advised that no other tests were used to confirm the results.

According to the FDA publication, the Charm II test is designed to detect classes of antibiotics rather than specific drugs (with the exception of novobiocin and chloramphenicol). Any positive results must be confirmed by other means.

The FDA surveyed samples from the cities in the newspaper article and the cities first surveyed in March 1988. While 36 of the 70 samples were found positive for antibiotic drug residues by the Charm II method, the results of the confirmatory test didn't find the level of drug residues present to be a concern. (The FDA used the high-pressure liquid chromatography method to confirm the results.)

Based on their findings, the FDA increased drug labeling and storage requirements in the Pasteurized Milk Ordinance (PMO).

According to Hoge, the difference between the test results remains unexplained. "The FDA is continuing its screenings for residues. We are also scrutinizing the drug testing methodology."

The new requirements come with severe penalties for non-compliance. "Infractions are worth seven points. It's going to be very hard for a dairyman to retain high Grade A market if the drugs are not properly stored and labeled," Rook said.

"There are three overriding principles to comply with PMO regulations," said Hoge. "First, for PMO purposes, the labels determine proper drug use and storage compliance. The only exceptions are 510.450 sulfas.

"Chloramphenicol is illegal for use in food-producing animals. Sulfamethazine is illegal for use in female dairy cattle over 20 months of age.

"Finally, there are only three sulfa-drugs approved for use



Paul Hoge of the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture informed vets and field men about the Pasteurized Milk Ordinance (PMO) regulations for drug labeling and storage.

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Meeting state and federal environmental requirements is a major challenge facing retail fertilizer and agricultural dealers in the 1990s.

To assist dealers in responding to complex environmental issues, the National AgriChemical Retailers Association (NARA) and the National Fertilizer Solutions Association (NFSA) have agreed to jointly sponsor the Agriculture for a Clean Environment (ACE) Program.

"NARA and NFSA work together through ACE to assist dealers in becoming recognized as environmental professionals in their local communities," said James Boillot, executive vice president/CEO of NFSA in St. Louis.

"The purpose of the cooperative effort is to help retail fertilizer and agricultural dealers meet and beat the challenges environmental restraints are presenting," said Kenneth Root, executive director of NARA.

ACE was established by NFSA in 1989 to provide dealer leadership in response to environmental concerns about the handling and use of fertilizer. With the recent agreement, ACE becomes the single program created by dealers

to address the environmental needs of the retail fertilizer and agricultural industry, according to Root and Boillot.

Through this united venture, expansion of the existing ACE Program will include several new activities:

- A self-help dealer facility checklist to identify areas of a dealership which may require revisions and to determine whether a facility assessment may be needed.

- An environmental awareness campaign to promote environmental professionalism at dealer facilities.

- An environmental handbook for implementing a comprehensive environmental compliance program at a retail facility and to identify recommended practices which go beyond regulatory requirements.

- An environmental information clearinghouse to provide dealers with comprehensive, factual information about the environmental and regulatory issues they are facing.

- An expansion of ACE's existing environmental training and education activities to help dealers understand the broad range of environmental issues critical to

their businesses.

- A dealer recognition and certification program to promote and acknowledge dealer environmental professionalism and stewardship.

ACE will be directed by a nine-member administrative committee consisting of three members from NFSA, three from NARA, and one member each representing a fertilizer manufacturer, an agricultural manufacturer, and a non-industry representative. The administrative committee also may invite participation by advisory members selected from two state/regional fertilizer and agricultural association/alliance organizations and an academician, as well as Boillot and Root.

"It has been NARA's goal to encourage dealers to become model environmental stewards while maintaining a strong and successful bottom line," said Jake Redmon, NARA's president. "Through this cooperative project, ACE will give both organizations the tools to be a catalyst to make positive things happen in our industry and, therefore, society as a whole can reap the benefits."

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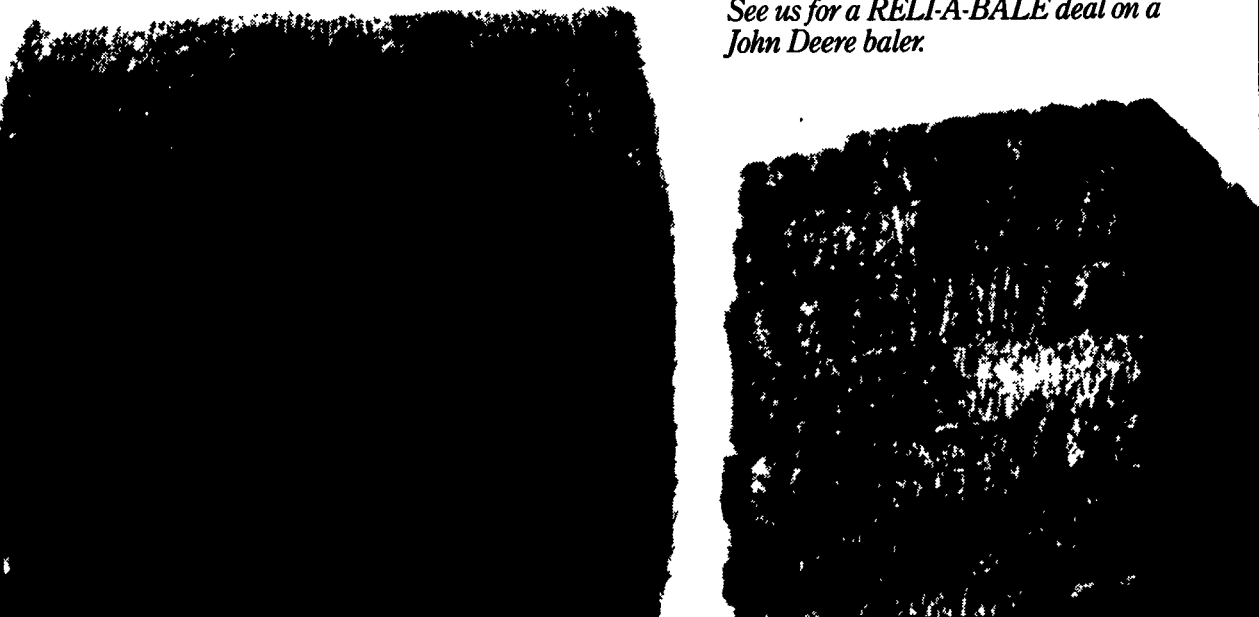
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