

Ridin' Herd

What does a feed tag tell you?

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There is a lot of information on a feed tag. This article will review information that is on a feed tag and then address some of the more frequently asked questions that producers have in regard to the information.

Information on a feed tag

Feed manufacturers are mandated by law to provide certain information on a feed tag. A custom-formulated feed would be the only exception to the mandated law. All commercially available feeds have to contain a label or tag that includes the following information:

- the net weight;
- the product and/or brand name;
- a guaranteed analysis stating the level of those nutrients guaranteed by the company;
- the common name of each ingredient (Some states may permit the use of collective terms for ingredients of similar type.);
- the name and principal mailing address of the manufacturer/seller;
- adequate directions for use of all commercial feeds containing drugs; and
- precautionary statements for safe and effective use.

Fig. 1: Example of a feed tag

16 B-68
MEDICATED

A SUPPLEMENT FOR PRE-WEANED CALVES
For increased rate of weight gain in pasture cattle (slaughter, stocker, feeder cattle and dairy and replacement heifers). For control of coccidiosis caused by *Elmeria bovis* and *E. zuernii*.

CAUTION: USE ONLY AS DIRECTED. INTENDED FOR FEEDING BEEF CATTLE ONLY.

ACTIVE DRUG INGREDIENT
Lasalocid (as Lasalocid Sodium).....68 g/lb.

GUARANTEED ANALYSIS

Crude Protein, (Min).....	16.0 %
Crude Fat, (Min).....	1.0 %
Crude Fiber, (Max).....	25.0 %
Calcium (Ca), (Min).....	0.5 %
Calcium (Ca), (Max).....	1.0 %
Phosphorus (P), (Min).....	0.40 %
Salt (NaCl), (Min).....	0.3 %
Salt (NaCl), (Max).....	0.6 %
Potassium (K), (Min).....	0.7 %
Zinc (Zn), ppm, (Min).....	130
Copper (Cu), ppm, (Min).....	35
Selenium (Se), ppm, (Min).....	0.8
Vitamin A, I.U./lb, (Min).....	8,000
Vitamin D ₃ , I.U./lb, (Min).....	2,000
Vitamin E, I.U./lb, (Min).....	10

INGREDIENTS
Processed Grain By-Products, Roughage Products, Plant Protein Products, Calcium Carbonate, Salt, Cobalt Carbonate, Manganese Sulfate, Ethylenediamine Dithiodide, Zinc Sulfate, Vitamin D₃ Supplement, Mineral Oil, Copper Chloride, Vitamin E Supplement, Vitamin A Supplement, Sodium Selenite.

Bulk – or – 50 lb (22.67 kg) Net Weight

DIRECTIONS FOR USE
For increased rate of weight gain: Feed at the rate of 1.76 to 5.88 lbs./head/day to provide 60 to 200 mg. of lasalocid when on pasture.
This is not a complete feed. Always provide adequate forage and fresh, clean water.
For control of coccidiosis: Feed at a rate to provide 1 mg lasalocid per 2.2 lbs. (1.0 kg.) of body weight (1.33 lb. CREEP PASTURE GEST 16 B68 per 100 lbs. body weight daily) to a maximum 280 mg lasalocid (8.25 lbs./head/day). Each pound of this product provides 34 mg lasalocid. Feed continuously to cattle up to 620 pounds body weight.
This is not a complete feed. Always provide adequate forage and fresh, clean water.
NOTE: Coccidiosis may occur when your cattle are co-mingled with other cattle passing coccidial oocytes, particularly adults, or when environmental contamination with coccidia is high.

CAUTION
The safety of lasalocid in unapproved species has not been established. Do not allow horses or other equines access to lasalocid as ingestion may be fatal. Feeding undiluted or mixing errors resulting in excessive concentrations of lasalocid could be fatal to cattle and sheep.

WARNING
A withdrawal period has not been established for this product in pre-ruminating cattle. Do not use in calves to be processed for veal.

DO NOT FEED TO SHEEP DUE TO HIGH LEVELS OF SUPPLEMENTAL COPPER.

Medicated feeds

If the feed includes a medication, additional information needs to be included on the label. In addition to the information required for nonmedicated products, medicated feeds require the following information:

- the purpose of the medication;
- directions for use of the feed product;
- the names of all active drug ingredients;
- the concentration of all active drug ingredients in the feed;
- a warning or precautionary statement for withdrawal period when required by law; and
- warnings against misuse.

Medicated feeds/supplements must be fed according to label directions. If the feed is medicated, the word “medicated” usually appears directly below the title or name of the feed. As an example: Land O’Lakes has a feed named Creep Pasture Gest 16 B-68. This is a medicated feed, and directly below the name of the feed (see Fig. 1), it indicates this feed is medicated.

There is no “extra” label use or feeding of medicated feeds. That means your nutritionist, veterinarian or beef specialist cannot prescribe a feeding level other than what is indicated on the label.

Beef Quality Assurance (BQA) standards suggest you keep records when feeding medicated feeds for at least one year, and Nebraska BQA recommends keeping the records for three years. You need to record what medicated feed was fed, active ingredient, to which animals the feed was fed, and beginning and ending dates of when the medicated feed was fed. It is suggested to sample the feed and store the feed sample and the feed tag in a plastic bag in a safe place that is mouse-proof.

Other items

The feed tag will have a purpose statement. The purpose statement gives a very brief description of what the product is to be used for. For example, a manufacturer designs a medicated feed for the control of coccidiosis, and the feed tag will say “for control of coccidiosis.” The manufacturer simply states the intent of the product.

Also on the tag is a “guaranteed analysis” that provides the nutritional information for the product and indicates minimums and maximums of certain nutrients. State agencies specify the nutrients that must be guaranteed.

The feed company must include a minimum amount of information in this area. The guaranteed analysis also does not provide an accurate indication of the quality of the products used. An endless combination of ingredients can be combined to meet these specifications at a wide range of costs.

Feed tags usually contain collective feed terms. “Collective terms” refers to a general classification of ingredients of common origin that have a similar function, but do not necessarily have equivalent nutritional values. Collective terms provide flexibility in feed formulation by allowing feed manufacturers in different geographical areas to use the same feed labels and take advantage of ingredient price fluctuations. This is commonly referred to as an ingredient list.

The ingredient list is a listing of the ingredients (specific or

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nonspecific) used in the manufacture of the product. This may be a list of actual ingredients (corn, cottonseed meal, alfalfa meal, etc.) that are included in the product. Feed companies will commonly use collective terminology, which groups ingredients into broader categories.

As another example, corn or milo (grain sorghum) would fall into the grain products category and soybean meal or cottonseed meal would fall into the category of plant protein products. This gives the feed company more flexibility to modify the product as necessary to take advantage of market movements.

Minerals and vitamins are specified individually. Ingredients are to be included in the order of highest to lowest inclusion level.

Feeding directions will also be included on the feed tag. Feeding directions indicate how the product is to be fed to produce the results desired. Again, medicated feeds are fed according to label directions.

There may be a caution or a warning statement on the feed tag. These are usually included to warn the user that this product is not to

be fed to specific livestock. If there is a withdrawal period on the product prior to harvest, it will appear on this portion of the feed tag.

Final thought

Be an informed buyer. A feed tag contains a lot of information, and it is important that you understand the information provided. If you purchase a medicated feed, follow label directions and any withdrawal that appears on the tag. Also, feed according to label directions since it is a violation of the law to feed medicated feed any other way. In the next article we will discuss some of the other components that appear on a feed tag.



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