NEW DRUG FOR PNEUMONIA

The FDA has recently approved a new drug for the treatment of pneumonia. Pfizer’s new product, A180™, has been approved for use in beef cattle. This antibiotic is a member of a newer class of antibiotics—the fluoroquinolones. There has been a fair amount of controversy about this class of antibiotics in human medicine and veterinary medicine circles. The controversy revolves around the concern that bacterial resistance to the fluoroquinolones will develop and result in the emergence of “Super Bugs”. These bacteria would be resistant to the fluoroquinolones. These bacteria could infect humans, and no effective therapy would be available. Those concerned postulate that using these antibiotics in food animals, such as cattle, would accelerate the potential of developing bacterial resistance. While this concern has theoretical potential, the practical potential is extremely small or non-existent. This class of antibiotics is used routinely in human patients and in companion animal patients (including dogs, cats, and horses). These human patients and companion animals are in much closer contact with other humans than the products of food animals. The FDA has responsibility for determining the risk posed by this drug and has acted to approve it.

What is A180?

It is a new antibiotic manufactured by Pfizer and approved for use in cattle for the treatment of respiratory disease caused by Pasteurella multocida and Mannheimia (Pasteurella) hemolytica. These are the two most common bacteria that cause pneumonia in beef cattle. A180™ is the trade name that Pfizer uses for this compound; however, the actual drug is danofloxacin mesylate. The A180™ product is an injectable antibiotic and will be available in a multiple dose vial (250 ml).

How will I obtain this product?

This product will be available by veterinary prescription only. There will be no over-the-counter availability of this compound. Your veterinarian will write a prescription for you to obtain and use this product. Additionally, a valid veterinarian-client-patient relationship must be in place for your veterinarian to legally write this prescription. That means, you can’t call your brother-in-law in Montana who is a veterinarian there and have him write a prescription for your cattle. Your veterinarian will either dispense the A180™ to you or send the prescription to a licensed veterinary drug retailer or a pharmacy. Your veterinarian will determine that your cattle need to be treated with this product and will then write a prescription. He or she will also be responsible for any residues or other adverse reactions or consequences.

What will be the dose and route of giving this drug?

The new A180™ is an injectable compound and will be given subcutaneously at a rate of 1.5 ml (1.5 cc’s) per 100 pounds body weight. This will be an advantage for quality assurance (QA) reasons. The dose will be relatively small in terms of volume—about 10 ml for a 700-pound steer. Also, the subcutaneous route of administration will be very helpful for QA goals.
The subcutaneous route makes it easy for the treatments to be given in the neck region. This is another plus for QA goals.

**What will the withdrawal time be?**

The withdrawal time (the time from the last treatment until the animal can be sold or slaughtered) will be 4 days. This is a relatively short withdrawal time and will be an additional benefit.

**What other disease problems can I use this drug for?**

None. This compound will be approved only for bovine respiratory disease caused by the bacteria listed above. You can’t use this drug for pinkeye or foot rot or other non-approved conditions. This is similar another new antibiotic, Baytril® 100, which can only be used for bovine respiratory disease. Baytril® 100 is also a fluoroquinolone and this is the reason the use of these drugs is more restrictive.

**What are other drugs that are commonly used to treat pneumonia in cattle?**

Some other compounds that are commonly used for this purpose include: LA 200® (long acting oxytetracycline), Biomycin 200® (another long acting oxytetracycline), Nuflor® (florfenicol), Polylex® (ampcillin), Excenel® (ceftiofur), Micotil 300® (tilmicosin), Naxcel® (ceftiofur), and several other antibiotic products too numerous to mention.

**What class of cattle can be treated?**

This product, A180®, has been approved for beef cattle only. It will not be legal to use this drug in dairy cattle or in calves to be processed for veal. Along these lines, if you are not currently keeping records on drug use in your cattle-now is a good time to consider doing this on a routine basis.

This product is cannot be used in an extra label manner. That is to say, it cannot be used in sheep, dairy cattle, etc. It cannot be given intramuscularly, or intravenously. It cannot be used at different dosage rates or frequency from those listed on the label. The withdrawal time must be adhered to (4 days). It cannot be used to treat calf scours or other diseases not listed on the label. In other words, your veterinarian will not be able to write an extra label “prescription” for this product. It will be the responsibility of veterinarians and beef producers alike to use this new drug in a prudent and legal manner. We have a number of excellent compounds for the treatment of respiratory disease in cattle and our responsible use in accordance with QA guidelines will ensure their future availability. Be sure to discuss this new drug and other cattle health questions with your veterinarian.

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