

SB 27 (Hill) – California’s 2015 Antibiotic Legislation

Antibiotic resistance is an issue that threatens human health and animal health. Working with Senator Hill on SB 27, California Cattlemen’s Association helped lead the way in securing landmark legislation that will make California a leader in combating antibiotic resistance and ensuring judicious use of antibiotics while protecting ranchers’ ability to provide timely care for their livestock. SB 27 ensures ranchers can continue to use antibiotics effectively to treat, control and prevent disease.

Why was SB 27 introduced?

SB 27 follows the veto of SB 835 in 2014 also by Senator Hill which sought to prohibit the use of medically important antibiotics for feed efficiency or growth promotion. In his veto message, Governor Brown said the bill did not go far enough and directed the legislature to bring another comprehensive bill to his desk in 2015.

What does SB 27 do?

Beginning Jan. 1, 2018, SB 27 requires injectable and other medically important antibiotics not delivered through feed or water to be purchased with a prescription issued by a veterinarian.

- Independent of SB 27, all medically important antibiotics delivered through feed must be administered using a veterinary feed directive per federal regulations largely supported by the industry and pharmaceutical companies.
- Many antibiotics already require a veterinarian prescription (i.e. Nuflor®), but for those that currently do not but will beginning Jan. 1, 2018 (i.e. LA200®) can still be purchased at retail facilities with a veterinarian prescription.
- SB 27 requires the Department of Food and Agriculture to ensure that livestock producers in rural areas continue to have timely access to antibiotics.

SB 27 requires the Department of Food and Agriculture to develop voluntary stewardship guidelines and best management practices with veterinarians and livestock producers.

- Guidelines will be developed in coordination with the Department of Public Health, the Veterinary Medical Board and experts at the University of California Veterinary Medical School.

SB 27 will voluntarily monitor antibiotic use and most importantly, monitor patterns in antibiotic resistance.

- All information that is collected will be held confidential per the statutory provisions of the bill, including from FOIA or PRA requests.
- The data gathered in California will be integrated with national monitoring efforts.

SB 27 codifies in statute that antibiotics can be used for disease prevention where necessary.

- Specifically the bill states, “A medically important antimicrobial drug may also be used when, in the professional judgment of a licensed veterinarian, it is needed for prophylaxis to address an elevated risk of contraction of a particular disease or infection.”

What SB 27 DOES NOT do

SB 27 does not impact the use of non-medically important antibiotics such as ionophores (i.e. Rumensin®).

- Vaccines are *not* considered antibiotics and thus will still be available for purchase over-the-counter without a prescription.

SB 27 does not alter how antibiotics are administered under the California Veterinary Medical Practice Act or change the nature of the veterinarian-client patient relationship.

- So long as a relationship exists, veterinarians can prescribe antibiotics to a rancher under one prescription for up to a sixth month period.
- Producers must consult with their veterinarian at least once annually, however SB 27 *does not* require a veterinarian to administer the antibiotic or issue an individual prescription for each time an antibiotic is needed to treat, control or prevent disease.

Prepared by:

