

IMPORTANT Violative Residue Information

Dr. R. Tom Bass II, Renaissance Nutrition, Inc.



Recently, the FDA has reduced the tolerance for Neomycin residues in bob veal calves (calves slaughtered for veal when weighing no more than 150 lb) to ZERO.

The presence of ANY amount of this antibiotic detected when bob veal calves are slaughtered qualifies as a violative residue that can mean trouble for the producer that sold the calf (potentially BIG trouble if it's a repeat offense). With the passing of this rule, increased testing for slaughter residues was also instituted, which has in turn yielded a very large number of bob veal calves that have tested positive for neomycin (some also for tetracycline). At some packing plants, including one in Pennsylvania that slaughters the vast majority of bob veal calves in this region, EVERY CALF that is slaughtered is now tested for antibiotic residues. This level of complete surveillance will continue until the frequency of antibiotic-positive calves decreases to the FDA's satisfaction. Thereafter, residue testing will continue at whatever level the FDA deems appropriate, but will generally be based on the number of positive animals that are detected.

That being said, here are some thoughts worth considering when you decide what to feed your baby bull calves before they leave the dairy.

1. It is illegal to feed any of the following medications contained in milk replacers to bob veal calves: Neomycin, Terramycin[®] (oxytetracycline), Bovatec[®] (lasalocid), and CTC (chlortetracycline). The tags of all milk replacers that contain these antibiotics indicate this fact in the product warning statement ("Do not use this product in calves to be processed for veal"). Remember that if there's a question as to whether or not a product is legal/safe to feed to bull calves that will end up as veal, **READING THE TAG** will provide the answer.
2. Product options for feeding bull calves that will be slaughtered for bob veal include any/all unmedicated milk replacers and those containing Deccox[®] (decoquinatone). Of course, milk from the dairy could also be used to feed these calves, PROVIDED THAT it does NOT contain any antibiotic (or other medication) residues. *This consideration suggests that, for most dairies, waste milk probably should not be fed to bull calves leaving the farm. Although this practice presents less risk for causing a violative residue than feeding an unapproved, medicated milk replacer, some degree of risk may still exist.*
3. **TAKE TIME, READ LABELS.** We have enough challenges in our industry with respect to current and future antibiotic usage. If dairy producers want to continue enjoying the benefits afforded to us by antibiotics in the future, we'd better increase our compliance with existing regulations NOW.
4. Remember, if you feed medicated milk replacer (other than those containing Deccox[®]), please do NOT to feed it to bull calves that are going to be sold.

