8-steps for keeping records

Why keep written drug records?

- Prevent an accidental violative residue
- Save money
- Ensure effective herd health plan
- Reduced liability (drug records are required by law
- Improve your veterinarian’s effectiveness

Step 1_ Recommended or Approved Drug List
Early in your discussion with your herd health veterinarian you need to make a narrow list of drugs to be used on your dairy. From cost and product quality views, the intent is to minimize the size of your drug inventory, herd drug treatments and risk of selling food that contains an illegal drug residue.

Step 2_ Animal Treatment Plan
When practicing preventive medicine or treating early symptoms of a disease or infection, it is important to be consistent. Together with your herd health veterinarian, establish treatment protocols that meet your herd health needs. Periodically update and review your herd drug use with your herd veterinarian.

Step 3_ Beginning Inventory
Together with your herd veterinarian, review your current drug inventory. Safely discard all outdated drugs and any drugs not on your approved drug list.

Step 4_ Record Medicated Feed Purchases
Accidental antibiotic residues can result from improperly administering drugs, by any labeled or extra-label (EL) routes, including feed or water. Be sure to clean feed equipment between batches. Carefully dispose of leftover feed from feeder calves, hogs, etc. Feeding any ‘refusal feed’ or water that contains medication, to any other farm animals, could result in a food residue. Store all medicated feed/milk replacers away from normal feed.

Step 5_ Record of Drug Purchases
Most successful dairy producers will record herd animal drug purchases when they are made. In the case of a violative residue violation, the FDA will expect to see a complete drug record keeping system in place (including source) so, it is important to record all drug use and purchase information promptly.

Step 6_ Daily Treatment Record
Practice good herd drug use policies and properly identify treated herd animals. The quality of your milk, herd beef and veal sales rests in part on the use of good drug daily treatment records. Dairy producers who have accidently marketed milk, dairy beef or veal with violative residues know, first hand, the importance of keeping and using accurate treatment records.

Step 7_ Monthly Economic Comparison
When do you “cull” a market cow from your herd? Every month you should review the return on milking cow investment as well as records of cost to treat animals that are not lactating. Compare your expenses by using your daily treatment records. The same concepts apply to beef and veal producers.

Step 8_ Drug Disposal
Periodic review of drugs in storage will mean you occasionally throw away drugs which have expired. By recording your daily animal treatments and any discarded drugs, you create a paper trail of what has happened to all drugs purchased. Check with your veterinarian or drug manufacturer about returning expired drugs.