

APHIS NEWS

Animal and Plant Health
Inspection Service

United States Department of Agriculture

Change In Medicated Food Proposed For Bird Quarantine Stations

WASHINGTON, Nov. 20—Bird quarantine station operators at U.S. ports of entry may be allowed to use a pelletized medicated feed to treat psittacine birds (parrots) for psittacosis (ornithosis), if a proposal announced by U.S. Department of Agriculture officials is adopted.

Operators are currently required to feed psittacine birds a medicated cooked rice ration recommended by the U.S. Public Health Service.

Dr. John K. Atwell, deputy administrator of USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, said the department's animal import regulations require psittacine birds to be treated with chlortetracycline-medicated feed to reduce the danger of workers or veterinarians contracting psittacosis, a widespread bacteria-like disease of birds that can also cause serious respiratory illness in humans.

The proposed new regulations would offer either commercially available preparations or a cooked rice mash for use as medicated feed.

Atwell noted that the pelletized feed is palatable and its use makes it easier to maintain the proper levels of antibiotic and calcium. It is easy to store and requires no advance preparation.

The cooked rice mash must be prepared daily and cannot be treated with chlortetracycline until it cools.

"We believe the proposed new medication is as effective as the cooked ration now in use," Atwell said.

New regulations, if adopted, would remove reference to the Public Health Service guidelines and allow the use of pelletized feed, Atwell said.

Comments on the proposed new regulations may be submitted through Jan. 22, 1982, to the deputy administrator for veterinary services, APHIS, USDA, Room 870 Federal Building, 6505 Belcrest Rd., Hyattsville, Md. 20782. Text of the proposal is scheduled for publication in the Nov. 23 Federal Register. ●

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