



Veterinary Medicines Directorate

The British Rabbit Council
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Our Ref: 2037901

Date: 28 October 2019

Dear Madame or Sir,

THE VETERINARY MEDICINES REGULATION 2013

It has been brought to our attention that rabbit owners, including members of the British Rabbit Council, may be selling and administering unauthorised vaccinations to the rabbits at your shows.

The Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD) is the body responsible for ensuring all veterinary medicines in the United Kingdom are marketed in accordance with the Veterinary Medicines Regulations 2013 (VMR). The VMD's aim is to protect public health, animal health and the environment and to promote animal welfare by assuring safety, quality and efficacy of veterinary medicines. One of the purposes of the VMR is to prevent veterinary medicines being purchased or administered in a way that could potentially damage the health of both humans and animals.

Vaccinations for rabbits are classified as Prescription Only Medicines – Veterinarian (POM-V). A veterinary medicinal product classified as POM-V may only be supplied by a veterinary surgeon or a pharmacist and must be supplied in accordance with a prescription from a veterinary surgeon.

The use of all medicines is associated with potential risk to the health of animals, humans and to the environment, unnecessary use raises this risk. Veterinary diagnosis and prescription balance these risks against the benefit of use and reduces the exposure to risk through advice on any precautions the owner should take when using a medication.

For example, vaccines from another country may not be effective against the UK strain of a virus, meaning an unauthorised vaccine may not provide immunity for the rabbits.

Paragraph 8 (a) of the VMR states;



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“No person may administer a veterinary medicinal product to an animal unless the product has a marketing authorisation authorising its administration in the United Kingdom, and the administration is in accordance with that marketing authorisation.”

Paragraph 25 (1) of the VMR states;

“No person may import or be concerned in the importation of an unauthorised veterinary medicinal product except in accordance with the regulation”

Paragraph 26 (1) of the VMR states;

“No person may be in possession of an unauthorised veterinary medicinal product.”

Paragraph 43 (d), (q) and (r) of the VMR states;

“It is an offence to fail to comply with regulation 8, regulation 25 (1) and regulation 26 (1)”

Please could you provide written acknowledgment by the **11 November 2019** confirming receipt of this letter.

We would appreciate if you could pass this message on to your members, to encourage the responsible, appropriate and lawful use of veterinary medicines.

If you have any queries or require clarification of any point, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully,



James Garrity
Enforcement Team



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