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Contact Communications

Phone (850) 245-0150



Florida Attorney General's Office News Release

Attorney General James Uthmeier Files to Provide Exemption for Xylazine to Support Veterinary Use and Combat Illicit Abuse

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Today, Attorney General James Uthmeier announced Florida has filed to reclassify xylazine from a Schedule I to a Schedule I controlled substance with an exemption for veterinary use. The move strikes a balance between protecting public safety and ensuring Florida's agriculture and veterinary communities can continue to access this critical medication for animal care.

"Florida farmers and ranchers depend on veterinarians having the tools they need to safely treat livestock," **said Attorney General James Uthmeier**. "By providing an exemption for xylazine for this limited purpose, we are protecting access for legitimate veterinary use while keeping this dangerous substance out of the hands of drug dealers and abusers."

"Drug abuse is not a victimless crime. It robs children of parents, hurts our economy, and makes Floridians less free," **said Florida Agriculture Commissioner Wilton Simpson**. "I support Attorney General Uthmeier's rule because it targets abuse while protecting the legitimate use, under veterinary care, which is important to our ranchers and farmers in Florida."

Xylazine is a prescription animal sedative, approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, that is used to facilitate safe medical evaluation, treatment, and surgical care of many species—including cattle, horses, zoo animals, and wildlife. It is the safest and most effective sedative for cattle and is vital to ensuring both animal welfare and human safety when handling large or wild animals.

Under the new classification:

- Only licensed veterinarians may obtain and dispense xylazine in the course of their professional practice;
- Farmers and ranchers may receive xylazine prescriptions only through a veterinarian for legitimate livestock care;
- Public sale or possession remains illegal—misuse outside of veterinary practice is a crime; and
- Enhanced scheduling allows law enforcement and regulators to track distribution, prevent diversion, and keep the drug out of illicit markets.

In veterinarian medicine, xylazine can be reversed after use, which prevents secondary injuries and allows animals to safely re-enter herds or the wild. Manufacturers and distributors of

legitimate xylazine already operate under strict compliance systems to ensure the drug is only provided to those lawfully permitted to use it.

Florida's reclassification maintains strong safeguards against abuse while protecting a critical tool for veterinarians, farmers, ranchers, and animal specialists across the state.

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