



BASIC INTERNAL PARASITE CONTROL

GASTROINTESTINAL NEMATODES (aka “worms”):

Most of the current recommendations are similar to cattle vaccination schedules, as taught by Dr. Thomas Craig, Veterinary Parasitologist, College of Veterinary Medicine, Texas A&M University. However, there are new studies and recommendations on the horizon (such as FAMACHA®) so current recommendations may change or be modified over time.

Current thought includes these points:

- The most problematic nematode for goats in Texas is usually *Haemonchus contortus*.
- Goats have a higher metabolism than other species, so double the cattle or sheep dosage. DO NOT double Levamisole/Tramisol as that dosage approaches the toxic levels - some recommend to multiply the cattle/sheep dose by 1.5 for this anthelmintic.
- Administer orally (yes, even the pour-on products). Administer with an oral dosing syringe w/extender, at the back of the throat to ensure delivery into the rumen (slows absorption to help prevent resistance...). While dosing, make sure to keep the nose pointed somewhat downward or straight ahead – never up. It is difficult to swallow when head is held upright.
- Deworm “strategically”, i.e.
 - 1) after the first killing frost (which is Dec 15 - Mar 15 for most of Texas) Dr. Craig notes this as the MOST IMPT time to deworm.
 - 2) in the spring - many producers time this to coincide with parturition (kidding). Nematode numbers tend to rise during the peri-parturient (around kidding) time.
 - 3) before 4th July Dr. Craig notes this as the 2nd MOST IMPT time.
 - Strategic deworming also includes deworming 2 days before turning onto new pasture (defined as a pasture that has been rested, hayed, or has been grazed by alternate species such as horses or cattle).
 - Pasture rotation for goat control of nematodes is longer than cattle, i.e. 3 months in the summer & 6 months in the winter. These times can be shortened if the pastures have been grazed by an alternate species, acting as biological vacuum cleaners to consume the goat parasites (sheep don't count, as they share parasite spp. with goats), or if pastures have been hayed or tilled to expose the

parasite larvae to the detrimental rays of the sun.

- Rotate anthelmintics (between classes, not within a class – see classes below) annually or when resistance develops as detected with the modified McMasters method of fecal egg counts (if a veterinarian is simply performing a fecal flotation, then it is not effective. The Texas Veterinary Medical Diagnostic Lab at Texas A&M will perform McMasters fecal egg counts for a fee.). More frequent rotation between anthelmintics only causes resistant strains to develop more rapidly.
- Confine newcomers, and deworm them with 2-3 different *classes* of anthelmintics. Turn them out to pasture with the others 7-14 days after treatment or when NO eggs are passed in the feces (determined by a McMasters fecal egg count). This helps to prevent resistant strains of parasites from being brought onto the farm.

- CLASSES OF ANTHELMINTICS

- 1) Avermectins (the ‘clear dewormers’) – e.g. Ivermectin, Eprinomectin

- 2) Benzimidazoles (the ‘white dewormers’) – e.g. Albendazole, Fenbendazole, Oxfendazole

- 3) Cholinergic Agonists (the ‘yellow dewormers’) – e.g. Levamisole, Morantel

- some anthelmintics are not recommended in early pregnancy, as they have been associated with abortions, e.g.:
 - Albendazole/Valbazen (also rec. not in last 3 weeks of pregnancy)
 - Levamisole
 - also watch the meat withdrawal times
 - Do not start with the "high power" dewormers such as Moxidectin/Cydectin as you will have nothing left to turn to when resistance develops to it!
- There is work being done with the FAMACHA® system of deworming and genetic selection of naturally parasite-resistant goats.

COCCIDIA

- Coccidia is a problem with goats generally younger than 6 months. In "meat" goat breeds (not used for milk for human consumption) this is usually handled by feeding N-Timidator by Sure-Fed, or another comparable brand, that uses Rumensin/Monensin, which have coccidiostat (suppression of coccidia) properties.
- Raising the goats without crowding is the best control, as in most animals.

The Annual Goat Field Day, held the third Saturday of May at the International Goat Research Center (IGRC), is an excellent place to learn many aspects of goat management. Drs. Tom Craig (TAMU) & Jim Miller (LSU) are often featured speakers on parasitology in goats.

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