

SINCE



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SMALL RUMINANT EDITOR

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DOES MY DEWORMER STILL WORK?

Many sheep and goat producers question if the deworming product they use to treat their animals still works effectively.

Many sheep and goat producers struggle with internal parasites in their flock or herd each year. One of the questions they often ask themselves is Does this dewormer still work? Producers can perform a Fecal Egg Count Reduction Test to check product effectiveness.

The Fecal Egg Count Reduction Test, FECRT, requires two fecal egg counts. The first fecal sample should be taken before an animal receives treatment, and then the second fecal sample should be taken 10 to 14 days later. Producers should always first identify animals exhibiting symptoms of parasite infections before treating them. This can be accomplished by using a five-point check system.

This system starts with evaluating anemia based on a FAMACHA score. Keep in mind that this score only assesses anemia, most likely caused by the *Haemonchus contortus* worm, also called the barber pole worm. Not all internal parasites cause anemia; hence, it is essential to consider other points.

Parasite infections can also cause swelling under the jaw, often called bottle jaw. This occurs when fluids accumulate under the jaw due to fluid imbalances related to anemia. While the most likely cause would be barber pole worm, this condition can also result from malnutrition.

Another area producers should assess is body condition. Animals with internal parasite infections often lose weight due to reduced appetite or issues with decreased nutrient absorption. Parasites can damage the stomach and intestinal lining, causing a reduced ability to absorb nutrients. This damage can be permanent, so it is essential to prevent it. All types of parasites can cause a loss in body condition.

Another point for producers to check is called a Dag Score. Producers can Dag Score animals by evaluating the area around and under the tail for diarrhea. Only certain types of parasites cause diarrhea. The brown stomach worm, the bankrupt worm, and coccidia cause diarrhea.

The last check area for sheep producers is evaluating the nose for any nasal discharge. Nasal bots cause this issue. However, goats are not affected by nasal bots. Therefore, goat producers should consider the condition of the haircoat. Animals with a rough, dull coat may have issues with internal parasites or could be experiencing problems with external parasites.

Once you identify animals that require treatment, collect samples from 15-20 animals in a similar group. For example, samples can be collected from weaned lambs or kids. Or, you could sample yearlings or mature females as a group. Be sure to record the animal identification for each sample. Treat these animals with a deworming product and then collect a second sample from each of these animals 10 to 14 days later.

Your veterinarian should be able to perform the fecal egg count for you. Or, if you have had sufficient training, you can perform the fecal egg counting procedure yourself. Ideally, the number of eggs per gram (EPG) in the second fecal sample compared to the first will decrease by at least 90% for the flock or herd. If the reduction is less than 90%, the flock or herd has developed internal parasites with resistance to the product you treated with.

To calculate the fecal egg count reduction (FECR) percentage, subtract the number of eggs per gram after treatment from the number of eggs per gram before treatment, divide that number by the number of eggs pretreatment, and multiply by 100.

$$(\text{Pre-treatment EPG} - \text{post-treatment EPG}) / \text{pre-treatment EPG} * 100 = \text{FECR} \%$$

The calculations should be averaged across the animals sampled to arrive at a FECR% for the flock or herd. For example, if the average number of EPG before treatment was 500 and the average number of EPG after treatment was 50, the FECR would be 90%. This indicates that the deworming product is still working well.

However, if, for instance, the pre-treatment average EPG was 500 and the post-treatment EPG was 200, this would only be a 60% FECR and would indicate that parasites within that flock or herd are resistant to the deworming product.

If a producer encounters a product that no longer works sufficiently, the same process could be repeated with a product from a different anthelmintic class. Currently, producers in the United States can choose from three different classes of products: benzimidazoles (such as Safe-Guard or Valbazen), macrocyclic lactones (such as Ivomec or Cydectin), and imidazothiazoles (such as Prohibit).

All producers should work with their local veterinarian to determine the best protocol for managing internal parasites in their flock or herd. Producers should also follow good prevention practices such as grazing forages no lower than four inches in height, rotating pastures, providing good nutrition, and handling animals quietly in a low-stress manner. Treating only animals that exhibit parasite infection symptoms will also help preserve dewormer effectiveness.

PennState Extension

PROPER GOAT HOOF CARE

Taking good care of your goats' hooves is an essential management practice.

Hoof care in any animal species is a vital part of their management. Goats' hooves require regular trimming and inspection to determine if there are any hoof problems that could lead to lameness or infection that can be spread among the herd, such as contagious foot rot.

Depending on the environment goats live in, they may need more or less frequent trimming. For example, goats living in rocky conditions where the hoof will wear against the ground may need less frequent trimming than a goat that lives in a grass pasture. Be familiar with the environment your goats live in and keep accurate records of when you perform hoof care. This will help you determine an appropriate schedule for your herd.

Hooves should not be allowed to over-grow as this keeps the animal walking properly. The goal of the trim should be to make the bottom of the hoof be flat and at the same angles as the hair line at the top of the hoof. All dirt and manure should be removed from the hoof prior to trimming. Michigan State University Extension recommends using a hoof pick or the tips of the hoof trimmers to do this. The walls, or sides, and heels should be trimmed flat with the sole.

As always, when trimming your goats' hooves, pay attention to the health of the hoof. Look for any signs of founder, abscesses, contagious hoof rot or granuloma. Goats that may have hoof infections should be treated accordingly.

MSU Extension

Augusta Co-op Solution Cydectin Sheep Drench, 1 L

For oral use only. This product has been specifically formulated for use in sheep and is not recommended for use in other animal species as severe reactions may result.



SKU - 308875

DO NOT treat sheep within 7 days of slaughter. DO NOT use in female sheep providing milk for human consumption.

FOOT ROT CONTROL

Foot rot is a disease that has been around the sheep industry for decades. Foot rot is one of the most economically devastating diseases of sheep. Although death loss due to foot rot is low, losses in production, labor and treatment is very costly.

Diagnosis

Lameness is the most obvious symptom of foot rot. However, sheep with an early infection of foot rot may not be lame. The infection will move under the sole of the hoof through a cut or break in the hoof. The quickest way to detect a bad case of foot rot is smelling of the hoof, foot rot has a very easily detected foul odor.

There are several other diseases sometimes confused with foot rot, such as foot scald, founder, injuries, arthritis and others. The point to remember is that foot rot is the only disease with an easily detected foul odor.

Prevention

Where foot rot is concerned, an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. Producers should quickly realize this disease is much easier and less costly to prevent than to treat. There are several management practices to help a producer remain foot rot free.

1. Never buy sheep infected with foot rot.
2. Isolate new additions to the flock for a minimum of two weeks.
3. Avoid using corrals or other equipment that have been in contact with infected sheep within a two week period.
4. Insist that commercial vehicles are properly disinfected prior to transporting sheep.
5. Run all newly arrived sheep through a foot bath.

Remember, foot rot is a disease normally the feet of newly purchased sheep. Quarantine new sheep for a minimum of two weeks. Trim feet immediately upon arrival, treat feet following trimming, and re-examine prior to putting new sheep with your flock.

Treatment

Elimination of foot rot requires continuous dedication to a systematic treatment schedule. Examine all sheep for foot rot and move all infected sheep into a quarantine area. Trimming the feet of uninfected sheep is not necessary, but a good management practice. Run the uninfected sheep through a foot bath and move to a clean area.

For infected sheep, trim the feet. It is important to remember exposure of diseased areas often results in some bleeding of the feet. This may be the most crucial part of foot rot control. If the diseased areas are not totally exposed, there is a good chance that the disease will progress. For effectiveness, the entire foot rot diseased area must be opened up for the foot bath treatments. After completing hoof trimming, direct application of topical medication should be sprayed on, then animals should then be foot bathed.

Treated animals should be moved to a dry area isolated from the rest of the flock. A dry area is very important. Research has shown the effectiveness of topical treatment is increased by 60 percent to 80 percent.

These infected sheep should then be rechecked every three days to five days, regardless of lameness. Opening up the foot rot will allow for quicker healing. Most veterinarians recommend running infected sheep through a foot bath at least twice per week. Quicker healing will result if sheep are moved through a foot bath each day. This can be accomplished by positioning the foot bath in an area that ewes will move through from food to water, or from the barn to pasture.

Once a ewe has healed she should be moved from the infected group to a third area for 14 days. This will allow rechecking before turning her in with the uninfected flock. Keep this procedure in force until foot rot is eradicated in the flock. There are a certain number of ewes that will be chronic carriers of foot rot (approximately three percent to five percent). Those ewes should be separated and considered for culling from the flock.

Foot Baths

There are several types of foot baths that will work. Fiberglass foot bath troughs are available that fit inside a working chute. These units are well constructed and durable, but can be somewhat expensive. Other producers have constructed their own foot baths using a 4 feet by 4 feet sheet of plywood and 2-inch by 6-inch boards forming the sides. The seams are then sealed with caulking. Putting a 2-inch to 3-inch layer of wool in the bottom of the foot bath will accomplish two goals. First,

Augusta Co-op Solution

Dr Naylor, Hoof 'n Heel, Liquid 16 oz

Topical antibacterial for hoof and foot rot in sheep, goats, dairy and beef cattle. Does not cause hoof to shrink, become discolored, hard or brittle. Pleasant to use - not sticky or messy. Does not stain or affect wool. No fumes - non-toxic. No residues - no withholding. Contains 11.2% zinc sulfate.



SKU - 468010

The best medication used by most sheep producers today is zinc sulfate. This solution is mixed with 8 pounds zinc sulfate to 10 gallons of water. This solution can be left in the foot bath and added to or replaced as is necessary. Other compounds that can be used are copper sulfate (8 lbs to 10 gallons water) and formalin (1 gallon formaldehyde in 19 gallons of water). Zinc sulfate has some distinct advantages over the other medications. It is much less toxic than copper sulfate, and will not become progressively less concentrated in an open foot bath as will formalin. Zinc sulfate may be purchased through most vet supply stores.

A vaccine called Footvax is on the market for the prevention and control of foot rot. This product has been shown to be most effective when used in conjunction with other foot rot control measures, such as hoof trimming and foot bathing.

Remember—Isolate, Trim and Treat!!!

Foot rot is a serious problem for all sheep producers, especially during wet, muddy weather. Oklahoma is no exception, Foot rot should be treated quickly or a major outbreak WILL occur. For help in implementing a cooperative drive against foot rot in a particular area, contact a local veterinarian, state Extension veterinarian or county educator.

OSU Extension

DAIRY GOAT PRODUCTION

Dairy goat production is an alternative livestock enterprise suitable for many small-scale or part-time livestock operations.

Dairy goat production is an alternative livestock enterprise suitable for many small-scale or part-time livestock operations. Some dairy goat producers have been successful in pasteurizing goat milk and building an on-farm jugging business, while others have ventured into processed milk products for retail distribution, especially specialty cheeses, yogurt, soap, and lotions. The potential also exists for selling milk to processors, usually on a regional basis. Although fluid milk and processed products are important markets, dairy goat producers should also consider the potential for selling animals to hobbyists and youth involved in vocational agriculture dairy projects.

In much of the developing world, goat milk is the primary milk source for humans. Goat milk is often sought for its perceived health benefits and unique taste. Although many health effects have been attributed to consuming goat milk, scientific evidence does not support most health claims. Goat milk is similar in composition to cow milk (Table 1), but some important differences exist in the protein structure. Because of these differences, people who have allergies to cow milk can often drink goat milk, and the smaller fat globules in goat milk stay in suspension longer, which leads to the perception of “natural homogenization.” Goats are excellent browsers, which allows them to consume plants containing aromatic or flavor compounds that can impart the smell or flavor to the milk or cheese, thus providing an opportunity to generate unique specialty products.

Marketing

The main marketing issue for prospective dairy goat producers is market entry for their product. There are few commercial processors to whom raw goat milk can be shipped, so many dairy goat producers build on-farm processing plants to produce products such as pasteurized bottled milk, yogurt, ice cream, cheese, and kefir. Selling processed products directly on the farm or in the store does require additional management and marketing skills; however, profit margins tend to be higher per unit sold compared to selling to a commercial processor. It is against the law in most states, including Pennsylvania, to sell raw milk or raw milk products unless it has been inspected by state milk inspectors. Some alternative uses for goat milk include creating health care products such as soap and lotion or as an on-farm substitute for milk replacer in lamb, veal, and pig diets. To use goat milk as an alternative feed source requires the dairy goat producer to buy and market lambs, veal calves, or piglets. Experience in managing and marketing these other livestock is also required, but it allows for the use of goat milk without state inspection.

Dairy goat producers must also realize that income from the kid goat crop is important. In addition to marketing the milk, the producer must also have a kid goat marketing strategy. It may be beneficial to raise kid goats to different market weights for different market seasons. Many ethnic groups are interested in purchasing kid goats, but producers must be aware of the desired weights and times when demand is greatest in such markets. For more information on raising meat goats, see “Agricultural Alternatives: Meat Goat Production.”

Production

The eight major dairy goat breeds in the United States are the Saanen, Sable, Nubian, Toggenburg, LaMancha, Oberhasli, Nigerian Dwarf, and Alpine. The lactation period for dairy goats averages 284 days, with peak production usually occurring four to six weeks after kidding. Representative production data for the various goat dairy breeds can be found in Table 2. Volume and composition of milk produced are primarily controlled by the goat’s genetics, but they are also greatly influenced by the diet consumed.

Dairy goats reach sexual maturity at four to five months of age. Young does should be bred at a body weight ranging from 70 to 80 pounds, which is usually at an age of 7 to 10 months. The gestation period ranges from 145 to 155 days with an average length of 149 days. Does normally produce between one and three kids per year (single-born kids weigh approximately 6

to 6.5 pounds at birth). Birth weights generally decline with multiple births and are often associated with increased mortality. Quality of nutrition during pregnancy influences birth weight and kid survivability. Pregnancy nutrition becomes an important part of good management as twin births are desired in an effort to improve productive efficiency. Does giving birth to twins produce more milk and have greater total kid weight per maintenance doe unit. Daily weight gains after birth range from 50 to 150 grams per day (0.1 to 0.33 pound per day), but meat goat crosses can exceed 250 grams per day (0.55 pound per day). Rate of gain will be determined by diet and the end product desired (e.g., replacement doeling or various weights depending on the meat market).

The three most important management recommendations to ensure efficiency and productivity of a dairy goat enterprise are as follows:

1. Manage young does to have them ready for breeding at seven months of age. This increases the total lifetime herd production of milk and meat and reduces the number of nonproducing animals in the herd at any one time.
2. Encourage freshening of the does over as wide a time span as possible. This provides your customers with a year-round source of milk.
3. Cull animals to eliminate low producers. This can increase the herd productivity if animals are culled for genetic reasons.

Nutrition

To maintain milk production and good health, goats should be fed a diet balanced for energy, protein, minerals, and vitamins based on requirements defined by the National Research Council. To reduce costs, forages such as hay, silage, and pasture should constitute most of the daily diet. Goats are efficient browsers and can select a high-quality diet from lower-quality forages, especially when consuming nontraditional pasture plants (e.g., weeds, shrubs). Available forages should be evaluated based on plant species and maturity, with the highest-quality forages reserved for pregnant, lactating, and growing animals.

Supplementing the diet with grain mixes to provide additional energy and protein is important, especially during lactation. Grain mixes may also contain supplemental minerals and vitamins. Feeding grain should be limited because a high-grain diet with low fiber intake can lead to rumen health problems (e.g., indigestion, acidosis) and lower milk fat content. Availability of dietary energy is important for high milk yields, while protein and fiber affect milk quality. High-producing does require quality forages and supplemental grain at a rate of 1 pound per 2.5 to 3 pounds of milk.

Forages generally do not contain sufficient minerals to meet dietary requirements, so supplements are usually required. Mineral mixes of salt with calcium, phosphorus, and trace minerals are typically used. Legume forages (e.g., alfalfa, clover) contain sufficient calcium and will only require phosphorus with a trace mineral supplement.

If pasture is the predominant source of forage, then vitamin supplements are not critical. If only hay or silage is used, then supplemental vitamins A, D, and E will be required. Vitamins can be supplied in a free-choice mineral source or the grain mix. Commercial cow rations or custom grain mixes varying from 14 to 20 percent protein can be fed to goats. Most products formulated for sheep will not contain enough copper for goats.

It is important to routinely use a technique called "body condition scoring" to evaluate the adequacy of the nutritional program you use. Body condition scoring categorizes animals in scores from 1 (emaciated) to 5 (obese) based on the amount of palpable subcutaneous fat over the loin, ribs, and sternum. Does should have adequate (score 3) body reserves in late pregnancy as they enter lactation. High-producing does lose significant body condition during early lactation, but they should regain it again during late lactation and early pregnancy.

Herd Health and Biosecurity

Goats, for the most part, are a hardy species that require only basic necessities to survive and produce a quality product. Most herd problems are related to nutrition and reproduction, but a few diseases are of concern. Some goat diseases can also infect people, so handlers must be careful. Seek the services of a veterinarian to help you develop an appropriate herd health program.

Parasites, both internal and external, are the most important concern for goat health and productivity. Weight loss, rough hair coat, and diarrhea are common signs of parasitism. Anemia (pale mucous membranes) can also be an indicator of internal parasites. A veterinarian or trained herdsman can determine if internal parasites are present by examining

Augusta Co-op Solution

Purina Goat Mineral, 25 lbs.

A free-choice mineral supplement rich in nutrients essential to the proper development and well-being of goats of all ages and breeds. A coarse particle for less waste and less dust. Contains added copper, zinc, vitamins and other minerals.



SKU - 53551

a fresh fecal sample. An increasing problem with parasite control in goats is parasite resistance to dewormers due to repeated use of dewormers without other parasite-control management. Basic parasite control practices include:

- Treating only sick animals
- Practicing proper sanitation, such as keeping feeders and waterers free from feces and bedding
- Avoiding overcrowding
- Practicing good pasture management and rotation
- Isolating sick animals
- Isolating new animals for 30 days before incorporating them into the herd

Because of year-round parasite problems, goats from the southeastern United States often harbor dewormer-resistant internal parasites. You will need to address this biosecurity issue if you plan on purchasing animals from this area.

Important infectious diseases of goats include caseous lymphadenitis (CL), caprine arthritis-encephalitis (CAE) virus, *Mycobacterium avium* spp. paratuberculosis (Johne's disease), and contagious ecthyma (or sore mouth). These diseases are best controlled by practicing good biosecurity since they are readily passed by animal contact or through milk from an infected doe. There is essentially no treatment for these diseases, and vaccines are available only for CL and sore mouth. It is recommended that you only vaccinate for sore mouth if there has been a history of the disease on your farm or within the herd. Work with a veterinarian to establish good screening test protocols for purchasing animals and a basic farm biosecurity program to prevent disease spread.

Other health problems for goats include foot rot, abortion, and mastitis. Foot rot is typically a bacterial infection of the skin between the hooves. Foot rot control starts with biosecurity to prevent infected animals from being brought onto the farm. It can also be reduced by good preventive care that includes routine hoof trimming. Nutrition and infectious agents can cause abortion in goats. Toxoplasmosis, transmitted by young cats, can cause abortion in both women and goats. Prevention requires keeping cat feces from contaminating feed consumed by pregnant goats. Mastitis, an infection of the udder, is a major concern with dairy goats. Providing sanitary conditions, good milking procedures, well-ventilated housing, and dry bedding is the best defense against this disease. Injuries to the udder and teat ends also contribute to this disease, which can lower milk production and cause permanent damage to the doe.

Housing and Equipment

There are four requirements for efficient dairy goat housing. First, the building should be adequately ventilated, and the walls and ceiling should be free from condensation. Second, the bedded area should be dry and clean. Third, feeders and watering devices must be well-built and located so that feed and water are not contaminated with animal waste. Ready access to good-quality water is essential for milk production and herd health. Fourth, housing should be arranged to minimize the amount of labor and time required for maintaining a clean facility.

A number of housing systems can be successfully used for goat production. In the northeastern United States, either loose (manure pack) or confinement (individual stalls) housing systems, with or without pasture access, are necessary to provide sufficient protection from adverse weather. Building adequate fencing to keep the goats contained can be a real challenge. The best fencing for goats is electrified woven wire or 2-foot by 4-foot livestock panels that are at least 48 inches high.

The milking area should be separated from the stable area and have a nonporous floor, such as concrete, to make cleaning easy. The milking platform should be 15 to 18 inches higher than the floor to permit easy milking. Milk must be cooled immediately after milking and held at a temperature under 40°F until processed or consumed. Cooling is critical to retain milk flavor and quality. Bacteria in warm milk begin to multiply quickly and cause milk quality to deteriorate. Cold water is more efficient than cold air for cooling milk. The refrigerator or cooler for small herds should accommodate a pan of water equal to the amount of milk in one or more milking buckets. A herd producing 10 or more gallons per day will need a water immersion cooler or a bulk tank cooler.

Environmental Regulations

All agricultural operations in Pennsylvania, including small-scale and part-time farming enterprises, operate under the Pennsylvania Clean Streams Law. A specific part of this law is the Nutrient Management Act. Portions of the act may or may not pertain to your operation, depending on whether you have livestock on your farm. However, all operations may be a source of surface water or groundwater pollution. Because of this possibility, you should contact your local Soil and Water Conservation District to determine what regulations may pertain to your operation. All farms with any livestock in Pennsylvania are required to have an approved manure management plan in place.

Risk Management

First, you should insure your facilities and equipment. This may be accomplished by consulting your insurance agent or broker. It is especially important to have adequate levels of property, vehicle, and liability insurance.

You will also need workers compensation insurance if you have any employees. You may also want to consider your needs for life and health insurance and if you need coverage for business interruption or employee dishonesty. For more on agricultural business insurance, see "Agricultural Alternatives: Agricultural Business Insurance."

Second, check to see if there are multiperil crop insurance programs available for your crop or livestock enterprises. There are crop insurance programs designed to help farmers manage both yield risk and revenue shortfalls. However, individual crop insurance coverage is not available for all crops. If individual coverage is not available for what you grow, you may be able to use the Whole-Farm Revenue Protection (WFRP) program to insure the revenue of your entire farm operation. Information from your Schedule F tax records from the past five consecutive years is used to calculate the WFRP policy's approved revenue guarantee. Operations that have expanded over time may be allowed to increase the approved revenue amount based on an indexing procedure. Depending on the number of commodities grown, you have the choice of coverage of 50 to 85 percent of your approved revenue. Coverage and premium costs depend on the level of diversification in your operation; the maximum level of insured revenue is \$8.5 million (based on maximum adjusted gross revenues of \$17 million and the 50 percent coverage level). WFRP also provides replant coverage if it is not already covered under an underlying individual crop policy.

Finally, the USDA Farm Service Agency has a program called the Noninsured Assistance Program (NAP) that is designed to provide a minimal level of yield risk protection for producers of commercial agricultural products that don't have multiperil crop insurance coverage. NAP is designed to reduce financial losses when natural disasters cause catastrophic reduction in production. A basic level of coverage (50 percent of expected production at 55 percent of the average market price) is available for a fee of \$325 per crop per county (fees are capped at \$825 per producer per county, but not to exceed a total of \$1,950 for producers growing crops in multiple counties).

Sample Budgets

The sample budget included in this publication provides examples of costs and returns to a commercial milk goat production system for 50 does and guidelines for initial resource requirements. These initial resource requirements may vary if you have existing equipment or structures that may be adapted for use in your enterprise. This sample budget should help ensure that all costs and receipts are included in your calculations. Costs and returns are often difficult to estimate in budget preparation because they are numerous and variable. Therefore, think of the data in these budgets as approximations and make the appropriate adjustments using "Your Estimate" column to reflect specific situations.

Penn State Extension

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EVENTS / CALENDAR

BACK TO SCHOOL SALE

September 22-27, 2025

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