

# Goat Parasite Control—General Guidelines<sup>1</sup>

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## General Guidelines

Gastrointestinal (GI) parasitism is the leading cause of death and decreased production in goats. At least 48% of farms in the southeast have parasites that are resistant to all classes of dewormers. While there is no one-size-fits-all recommendation for parasite control, the information in this fact sheet is provided for on-farm use. Contact your veterinarian for specific recommendations. Information was provided by Dr. Sarah Reuss of the UF Large Animal Medicine Service.

## Targeting Deworming

- Do not deworm all animals on a farm on a routine basis.
- 20% of animals shed 80% of the eggs.
- Leave “refugia” (worms not exposed to drugs, so they do not develop resistance).
- FAMACHA Scoring
  - Use mucous membrane color as indication of anemia and therefore parasite load (Figure 1).
  - Need training to acquire card and use effectively (Figure 2).
- Fecal Egg Counts
  - Generally reflect the animal’s worm burden with some limitations.
  - Use fecal egg count reduction to monitor efficacy of treatment.
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Figure 1. Use mucous membrane colors as an indication of anemia. Credits: Sarah Reuss



Figure 2. FAMACHA Card reading Credits: Sarah Reuss

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## Anthelmintics (Dewormers)

- Resistance is a huge problem.
- Only use products for oral administration.
- Do not use injectable products, and do not give injectable products orally.
- DrenchRite assay can be performed on a farm basis to determine which dewormers are still effective.
- Work with your veterinarian to plan a strategy for your particular farm.

## Smart Dreching

- Use proper dose.
- Administer drug properly.
- Pasture Management
  - Stocking density
  - If rotating pastures, rest at least six weeks in between use.
  - Clip, till, and reseed.
- Mixed Species Grazing
  - Horses and cattle do not carry the same parasites as goats and will help to break them down.
- Biosecurity
  - Isolate all new animals for at least 14 days.

## Alternative Therapies

- *Sericea lespedeza*, tannin-condensing forage shown to suppress egg counts
- Copper-oxide wire particles
- Nematode-trapping fungi
- Herbal products (diatomaceous earth, ginger, garlic, tansy) have not been proved to be effective