

Weekly Article

9-7-2021

Getting a Handle on Coccidiosis

Hello, my Name is Richard Purdin with OSU Extension, Ag and Natural Resource Educator and Community Development Educator for Adams County. I hope to better inform local producers and the public of the latest news in the world of agriculture. September is in full speed. As the days get shorter and nighttime temperatures get cooler, there has been a significant change in the landscape the last few days. Sunday morning brought a nice soaking rain to the county with reports of .6 inches to 1.5 inches of rain being received. It looks like the rest of the week of 9-7-21 through 9-12-21 will bring drier weather with at normal to above normal temperatures. With most of the state having adequate soil moisture, pastures and hay fields are in good condition. With above average forage growth many producers might try to graze a little longer and shorter than normal. Today I want to discuss some risk associated not only to the growth in forages but also livestock.

One disease that can be prevalent when grazing livestock are allowed to graze close to the surface of the soil. Coccidiosis is one of the most common diseases in the small ruminant industry such as sheep and goats. Coccidiosis can also be an issue in young calves. With many cattle producers switch to fall calving and fall weaning starting to begin it is important to be aware of the livestock's environment and overall health.

- **What is Coccidiosis-** Coccidiosis is caused by a microscopic protozoan parasite that invades the intestinal system.
- **What are the symptoms-** young calves, lambs, kids, and chicks are most at risk for coccidiosis infections. Signs to look for is lack of appetite, thriftiness, and bloody scours. When coccidia protozoa infects the intestine, cells are destroyed causing severe diarrhea.
- **How can Coccidiosis be prevented-** I consider coccidiosis a symptom of the animal's environment. The most common route of infection is due to fecal- oral transmission or consumption on fecal material. Young newborn calves, lambs, or kids can consume fecal material while nursing the mother or consuming contaminated feed. Maintaining a clean environment for livestock and providing good nutritious feed and clean water always can be a producer be preventative measures. Livestock currently being weaned are at high risk, this is due to stress on the immune system and being located into a new environment.

- **How to treat for Coccidiosis-** Some as producers, do everything right and livestock still get sick (that is just facts of farming), so treatments are warranted. Consulting your local veterinarian is crucial but many Sulfa drugs and the use of electrolytes are critical for helping animals recover (especially in the late summer early fall). Feeding ionophore feed additives also work very well as a preventative. Sometime treating with an antibiotic for secondary infections can help the animal recover at a faster pace.
- **What does grazing have to do with it?** - When animals are grazing a pasture too close or there is overstocking problems, the likelihood of animals consuming fecal material increases. Also, when good grazing practices are put in place, forages will grow back faster and healthier, as they say healthy pastures = healthy livestock!

Some other details to go over.

- September 14th, 2021, Adams County BQA/ Cattle Handling workshop will be held at the Adams County fairgrounds (Show Arena) 5:30 to 8:00pm. Contact the Adams County Extension office at (937) 544-2339 to RSVP.
- West Union Farm Service Agency is accepting applications for a full time Program Technician Position. If you are interested, you can apply online at www.usajobs.gov
- Farm Science Review Tickets are available at the office, the event will be September 21-23 in person!

From the field

- Corn silage harvest has begun
- Burley Tobacco harvest is in full swing and cigar wrapper tobacco harvest is almost complete.
- Increased presence of bean leaf beetles in soybeans.
- Fall Armyworm has slowed down only due to life cycle, pupas have been found in the soil (the next generation will emerge soon if the weather stays warm).
- Soybeans are beginning to mature and drop leaves.
- Fall calving and weaning is in full swing.
- Brown Marmorated Stink bug populations on the rise.
- Spotted Lantern fly has been identified in Cuyahoga County.
- Pumpkin growers with defoliated pumpkins due to downy mildew should pick the fruit and place in shelter to prevent sun burning.