



Deworming Program

If possible, always weigh animals prior to deworming to calculate and inject or drench the correct dosage of the dewormer.

- Assess body condition.
- Administer all drugs orally: pour-ons drugs applied as such are poorly absorbed.
- Under-dosing of goats because of failure to weigh the animals or because of underestimating their live weight is a very common but costly mistake because this may lead to faster parasite resistance to dewormers. Therefore, determine the dose according to the heaviest animal in the group. On the other hand, overdosing of certain dewormers can cause health problems.
- Goats metabolize drugs much more rapidly than other species of livestock and require a higher dosage. **RULE OF THUMB: goats should be given twice the dose for sheep or cattle. EXCEPTION: goats should only be given 1.5 the dose for sheep or cattle when using Levamisole (Levasol and Tramisol)**
- If deworming animals during pregnancy, before kidding, and during lactation, make sure that the dewormer used is safe for pregnant does. **Oxfendazole (Synanthic) should not be used in pregnant or lactating goats. Albendazole (Valbazen) should not be used during the first third of pregnancy.**
- Natural immunity and resilience wanes following kidding (also called the periparturient period). This means that even the resistant does can become susceptible to parasites during this period.
- Kids and pregnant does are more susceptible to parasite burdens.
- Respect dewormers withdrawal times for meat and milk.

Become familiar with the FAMACHA system, which is a new method of selective deworming. The FAMACHA system is based on the level of anemia of an animal by comparing the color of the lower mucus membrane of the eye to a colored chart. Anemic animals will have a pale color, whereas healthy animals will have a red color. The advantages of using the FAMACHA system include decreased number of treated animals, slower resistance to dewormers, selection of more resistant animals, identification of anthelmintic resistance, and decreased costs because only animals that need treatment are treated. The FAMACHA system should be used with good management and alternative means of controlling parasites such as alternative forages, good nutrition, sound pasture management, and exposing goats to browse type forages.

All North Carolina cooperative extension livestock agents have been trained in the FAMACHA system. Enquire when the next training will take place in your county. A FAMACHA card and educational materials are available upon completion of the training.

The FAMACHA system can be used all year around. Nevertheless, it is critical to use it during the following periods:

- Adults
 - 2 – 3 weeks before breeding
 - 2 – 3 weeks before kidding, or directly following kidding
 - Strategic, depending on climatic conditions and pasture worm loads

- Kids
 - 30 days of age
 - 60 days of age
 - Strategic, depending on climatic conditions and pasture worm loads

During hot and humid periods, it is recommended to take fecal samples before drenching the animals and 10 to 12 days later to determine fecal egg counts and to determine the effectiveness of the product used.

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There is an alternate Spanish language version of this document here: [Caprinos: aspectos básicos](#)

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