

## INTERNAL PARASITE (WORMS) CONTROL IN CATTLE

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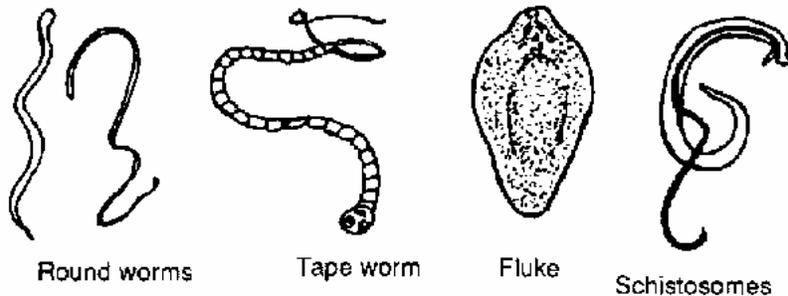
### TYPES OF WORMS

All animals (and humans) can become infected with worms. Cattle can be infected with several types of worms.

Roundworms are small, often white in colour, and look like threads. Different roundworms are found in all parts of the gut and the lungs.

Tapeworms are long, and flat and look like white ribbons. They consist of many segments and live in the intestine.

Flukes are flat and leaf-like. They live in the liver. Schistosomes are small and worm-like. Both flukes and schistosomes infect animals kept on wet, marshy ground as their eggs develop in water.



### HOW DO ANIMALS BECOME INFECTED WITH WORMS?

Roundworms, flukes and schistosomes lay eggs (not visible without a microscope) which pass out of the animal in the manure. Tapeworms produce eggs in the segments which break off and pass out in the manure. The eggs hatch and the baby worms (called larvae – also not visible without a microscope) crawl out of the manure and onto the leaves of nearby plants and survive for weeks to months, depending on the temperature and moisture. The larvae will usually die by the end of the dry season. Animals become infected when they eat fresh green grass (or other plants) with worm eggs or larvae.



## **THE EFFECT OF WORMS ON THE ANIMAL**

Worms feed on the blood or on the food in the gut of the animal. Young cattle become weak and lose weight or do not gain weight, especially if nutrition is not good. Young animals are especially affected by worms because they have no immunity and are not as strong. Young cattle can develop diarrhea if they have a large infection with worms, and can become weak and die. They will often have a rough hair coat as well. Mature cows will lose weight, give less milk and can take longer to get pregnant.

## **CONTROL OF WORMS**

1. Giving dewormer to kill the worms within the body. In general, young cattle should be dewormed every 2 to 3 months. Cows should be dewormed at calving, and again 3 to 4 months after calving to give more milk and to increase chances of conception at breeding. Deworming every 3 to 6 months after these two times should lead to increased milk, better body condition, or both. With the new dewormers that you pour onto the animal's back, deworming is required less frequently. You can even consume or sell a cow's milk with some new dewormers. Ask your veterinarian for advice on which dewormer you should use on which animals, when and how often.
2. Reducing reinfection through feed management. Use a waiting period between manure application to grass and feeding fresh grass from that area to cattle, especially for young animals with less immunity. Making silage or dry hay will usually kill the worm eggs and larvae during the storage period, so no waiting period is necessary for stored feed.
3. The length of the waiting period depends on what is possible on the farm. A dry season should kill the eggs and larvae on the grass. Therefore, if possible, apply manure to grass fields at the start of the dry season. By the end of the dry season, grass from these areas should have few surviving eggs and larvae. Manure passed during the three weeks after deworming treatment should have no eggs and therefore would be an exception to this rule.
4. Removing the manure from the pen daily will prevent the animals from picking up more worms directly from the manure in their pens.

### **Remember for Worm Control in Cattle:**

Use good manure management practices

Wait one dry season after manure application before giving feed to cattle

Use dewormers recommended by your veterinarian

## **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

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