

# Ask the VMD



Leon Riegel Tim Trayer Edgar Sheaffer

## Pop! bottles for grubby livestock?

### A reader asks:

What's the best method for removing grubs from the backs of cattle and sheep. I've seen some folks use an empty soda bottle to press down over the grub lump and draw it out...is there a better way?

### Dr. Riegel comments:

The best way to have grubs removed from the backs of cattle or sheep is to let the grub remove itself. When this is done, there is no change of rupturing the larva and setting up tremendous tissue reactions in the area of the grub.

If it is imperative that the grub be removed, you should make sure it's (ready) to be removed. If you attempt to get the grub out too early, the chances of causing problems are greater.

Removing the grub itself can be accomplished by squeezing it out by hand or by some other mechanical means, none of which I can proclaim as the best method.

Once the grub is removed, it should be crushed to stop the life cycle right then and there.

Cattle grubs, the offspring of heel flies, cause millions of dollars in lost profit each year. The heel fly, also known as warble fly or cattle warbles, have an elaborate life cycle which begins with the fly laying its eggs on the lower legs of cattle or sheep.

After the egg hatches, the

larva penetrates the skin and begins extensive migration through the connective tissue. It travels to the area of the throat, then up to the back where it cuts a hole in the skin, increases the size, and drops out two and a half to three months later.

After the larva pupates, an adult fly emerges to begin a new life cycle. The complete cycle takes about seven months.

Where the fly becomes damaging to sheep and cattle, and when the profit loss starts, is as the grub enters the exits the skin. As the larva migrates, it destroys muscle and skin tissues. To cope with the toxins produced by the grub, the animal turns its energy

to fighting back which results in decreases in weight gains.

Using insecticides to combat the larva can lessen the weight losses. Care must be exercised when using insecticides, however, not only because of the toxic nature of the chemicals, but also because of the possibility of potentially bad side effects to the livestock.

If grubs are killed when they are located in the throat area, their death may set up a tissue reaction which could possibly cause the animal to strangle.

When using insecticides, be sure to follow the label directions carefully, noting especially the withdrawal times before the animals can be slaughtered for meat.

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The time to comment on nine grain standards' studies proposed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Federal Grain Inspection Service has been extended to March 17. The proposal appeared in the December 28, 1979, Federal Register.

Leland E. Bartlet, FGIS administrator, said public advice is needed to identify and set priorities among such suggested standards' studies as field testing alpha amylase content of wheat, uniform requirements for the special grade called "weevily," certifying dockage in tenths of a percent, special grade for organic acid-treated grain, simplified format for the U.S. standards for beans, objecting testing procedures for hay, the need for buckwheat standards, and the need for rapeseed

standards.

Written comments should be sent to Comments Section, FGIS, USDA, Room 2405 Auditors Bldg., 1400 Independent Ave., SW,

Washington, D.C. 20250. All comments will be available for public inspection.

Copies of the proposal are available from the same address, phone 202/447-8262.

## USDA extends comment time



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