



Ask the VMD

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Mange and Lice Control

A reader asks:

Is there anything new on the market for mange and lice control? It always seems what worked last year doesn't do the job this year.

Dr. Trayer Comments:

Probably the biggest fault of any mange or lice program is the lack of follow-up. Often times the producer will treat the animals once and then consider the problem to be under control. However, when looking at the life cycle of the parasite one has to realize there is a 21 to 35 day period between the egg and the adult female's egg production. One treatment will kill the adults, but 30 days later the problem begins all over again.

If you are a seasonal producer, a once a year treatment may seem to clear up the problem because you are not handling the hogs as often. Therefore, the problem goes

unnoticed. Lice and mange control is a real problem for swine producers. It should be controlled or eliminated from your herd if possible. The problem is likely to cost you 10 to 20 percent in feed consumption on your finishing floor. It is also a problem with the breeding stock as it can lower the blood iron content thereby making the offspring less healthy.

I have found a product called linspray, primarily lindane which is emulsified and then sprayed on the animal, to work fairly well. However, it must be used in the proper dosage and used in the proper rotational time interval. It should be sprayed once, and two weeks later sprayed again.

When we speak of lice, they are external parasites *haematoposuis* that can be seen with the naked eye usually behind the ear or somewhere on the warmer parts of the body in the winter.

The other external parasite most

commonly recognized in the United States is the mange mite, *sarcoptes scabiei*, which is microscopic and can be noticed only by the effects it has on the animal. As the mite burrows between the layers of the skin it makes a tunnel. The animal then begins a drastic and constant scratching to try to stop the migration of the mite. As the animal scratches he wastes energy and does not eat which creates a serious problem.

There are also blood sucking species and the loss of blood will predispose the animal to anemia and can cause low blood iron levels

particularly in breeding stock. Death is rare, yet, there may be a severe loss of protein or the deletion of iron. The infestation may migrate down through the ear drum and cause an infection which will then migrate into the brain and cause the hog to circle.

In general lice are visible to the naked eye and are diagnosed easily; while the mites are harder to see and can best be diagnosed by the scratching, head shaking, or ear biting done by the animal.

Once the problem is identified you have three choices. One is to ignore the problem and live with it. Two, is to try and control it with the insecticides that are available. It has been reported, but never proven that there can be a resistance built up to certain chemicals. The third choice is depopulation and repopulation, with breeding stock that are free of lice and mange.

If you are really serious about controlling lice and mange, one solution is to build a well-constructed dipping vat. Make


sure it is deep and long enough to completely submerge the animal. Tanks are probably the easiest and most successful method of making sure the animal is completely treated with insecticide. For more information on tanks contact me (Dr. Trayer), your extension agent or an equipment dealer.

Insecticides may also be sprayed on the animals. However, caution should be used so you protect yourself and make sure that the animal is completely covered with insecticide especially in the ear canal.

Be sure to read the instructions on the chemicals. One-particular chemical, toxaphane, can cause neurological problems if applied at the wrong time. My preference as previously mentioned is linspray.

The third option of depopulation and repopulation, should only be used in extreme cases. Many swine producers can verify that their herds have never had these problems and these hogs are called

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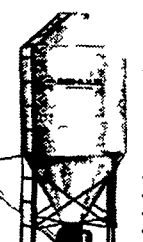
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