

Hot, Humid Weather Could Mean Sheep Blowfly Problems

UNIVERSITY PARK (Centre Co.) — Sheep producers in the northeastern United States should guard against blowfly infestations this summer, warns an animal scientist in Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences.

"This summer's prolonged hot and humid weather is causing a high rate of blowfly infestations in breeding flocks and feeder lambs," said Dr. Clair Engle, associate professor of animal science. "Producers need to be aware of the

causes, symptoms, prevention, and treatment of blowfly infestations."

Blowflies thrive in hot, wet environments and need warm, damp and dark areas with a good nutrient base to deposit and hatch their eggs. Sheep are perfect for the job. "Their woolen bodies make sheep especially susceptible, but blowflies attack other animals, too," Engle said.

"Sheep with dense fleeces, wrinkles, wool longer than an inch, heavily matted wool, or soiled breech wool are prime targets for blowfly to strike. Adult flies are strongly attracted to the slightest wound, so sheep with open wounds or infections from shearing, docking, castration, or ear tagging also are at high risk."

When a blowfly lays eggs in a sheep, larvae hatch within 24 hours and develop fully within six days, feeding on skin and wound secretions. The maggots then burrow into the skin or wound area to mature, eventually dropping to the ground where they pupate to adult blowflies.

No flock is immune from blowflies in hot and humid weather," Engle said. "Producers must watch their sheep and clean patches where the wool is wet, dense, and soiled with feces, urine, wound exudates, or other secretions."

The body parts most likely to be attacked are the breech, the crutch of ewes or lambs on feed, and the pizzle or sheath region on rams and wethers. Producers also should check the rump, the head at the base of the horns, and any skin or foot lacerations.

Infested breech areas are most common. "The first symptom usually is a spasmodic twitching of the tailhead region and frequent stomping of the hind feet, accompanied by general restlessness and failure to feed or associate with the flock," Engle said. "Closer examination will reveal the odor of decaying tissue. If the infestation isn't stopped, animals soon

die from tissue destruction and toxins produced by the feeding larvae."

To treat a blowfly strike, the wool must be clipped to expose the infested area. "Farmers may find a wound teeming with larvae, which must be flushed out," Engle said. "At this point, call a veterinarian to treat and dress the wound."

Dressing the wound properly enhances healing and provides fly protection. "Use an effective fly repellent to protect both the wound and the sheep," said Engle. "Don't let the affected area become sunburned, especially if the wound is on the upper body. Keep recovering sheep in a clean, well-

ventilated, shaded facility with good fly control during the first week after treatment."

Applying certain insecticides to sheep in short fleece can reduce blowfly infestations during hot, wet weather. "Most sheep supply stores sell safe, effective sprays that provide protection for up to a month," Engle said. "Many fly control sprays recommended for the dairy industry also will work well for sheep. Local veterinarians can help find the best solution for your situation."

When using insecticides, always read and follow the directions and strictly observe any withdrawal requirements printed on the insecticide label.

Wilson Honored

UNIVERSITY PARK (Centre Co.) — The northeast section of the American Society of Animal Science/American Dairy Science Association has presented Lowell L. Wilson its Distinguished Service Award at its recent meeting at the University of Maryland, College Park.

The Distinguished Service Award recognizes Wilson, professor animal science in Penn State's Department of Dairy and Animal Science, for his outstanding contributions to the field of animal science and animal agriculture.

Wilson joined Penn State in 1966 and has conducted a wide range of research, primarily in beef cattle breeding, beef and sheep management systems, forage utilization, growth promoters, and agricultural by-products as livestock feeds. More recently, he has conducted research with special-fed veal systems and public perceptions of animal production methods. He has developed educational and informational materials on farm animal care, use, and welfare and the role of agriculture in society.

Wilson presently serves as a director of the Pennsylvania Livestock Association, Pennsylvanians for the Responsible Use of Animals, Pennsylvania Beef Council, and the Pennsylvania Cattlemen's Association. He has served as an officer of Pennsylvania's Forage and Grassland Council, Beef Council, and Cattlemen's Association. Also, he is currently secretary of the Pennsylvania Cattlemen's Association and technical adviser to the American Veal Association.

Wilson has authored or co-au-



Lowell L. Wilson

thored nearly 100 scientific papers, more than 450 technical and producer-oriented articles, and several monographs and book chapters. He has taught several undergraduate courses and supervised 43 masters and five doctoral degree candidates. He has made scientific presentations in Australia, Argentina, Canada, Columbia, Mexico, Chili, South Africa, Ireland, Spain, England, Venezuela, New Zealand, Ukraine, and Russia.

After receiving undergraduate and graduate degrees from The University of Wisconsin at Platteville and South Dakota State University, respectively, Wilson served as extension beef specialist at Purdue University in the mid-1960s, where he initiated electronic data processing of beef cattle records.

Maryland Ag Field Day Wednesday

COLLEGE PARK, Md. — Let a wagon become your classroom as you learn alternative agricultural enterprises, environmental issues, and Maryland tobacco at the Maryland Agriculture Experiment Station's (MAES) Southern Maryland Ag Field Day at the Upper Marlboro Facility.

The field day will feature two concurrent wagon tours, which will begin on July 28 at 8:30 a.m. and conclude at noon.

Stops along the tobacco tour include Maryland tobacco breeding and genetics, research on nitrogen quick testing for Maryland tobacco, new herbicides for tobacco and other field crops, aphid control practices, concerns about the PVY-N potato virus on Maryland tobacco, and phosphate rate studies.

The alternative agricultural enterprises and environmental tour will highlight cut flower production, row mixtures and force fields, resistant management tactics for colorado beetle control, new management tools for controlling cucumber beetle and spread of bacterial wilt, fencing alternative for intensive grazing, environmental impact of alternative pesticide formulation and tillage practices, and research and extension effort involving water quality.

For more information on the Southern Maryland Ag Field Day, contact your local cooperative extension office or the Upper Marlboro facility at (301) 627-8440.

Ciba Seed Unit Expects Dynamic Growth

GREENSBORO, N.C. — Ciba Plant Protection's Seed Treatment Business Unit expects to add three new compounds to its product line within the next two to five years, according to Director Don Elliott.

Seed Treatment is Ciba's newest business unit and is part of its new Commercial Development Group, which was formed in January.

Ciba projects that the seed treatment industry should grow 8 to 10 percent per year during the next five years.

"Our new Seed Treatment Business Unit will allow us to concentrate on new opportunities in this area," said Commercial Development Vice President Ken Kemp.

Environmental benefits are one reason for the industry's growth, Elliott said. "Seed treatment is an excellent strategy for preventing and controlling disease or insect infestations without affecting the environment and with minimal personal exposure," he said.

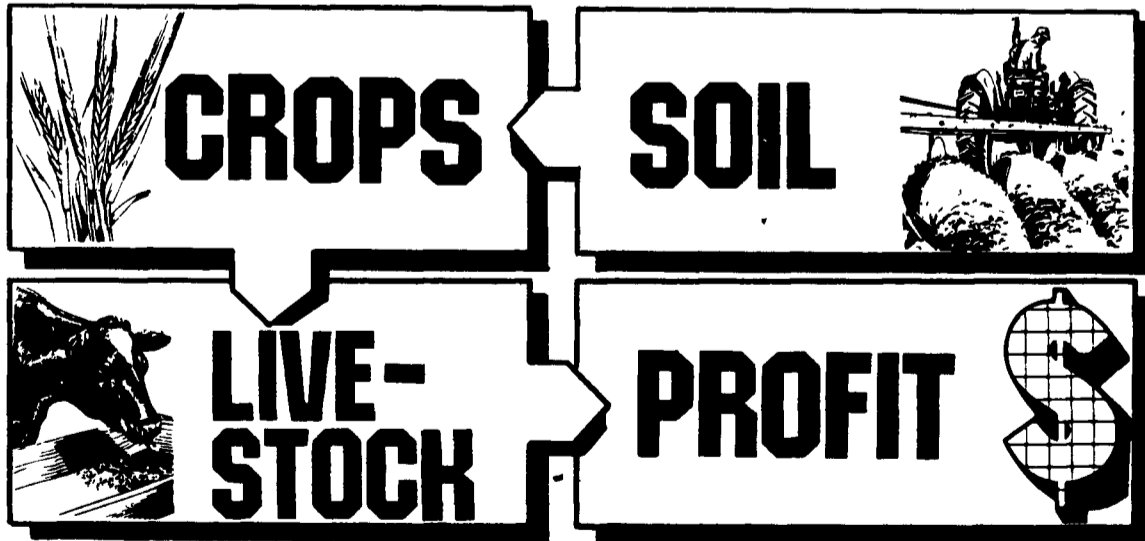
Seed treatment products that are being developed by Ciba include:

- Dividend™, providing systemic disease control for cereal crops. It is particularly effective against seedling diseases in wheat. Plus, it offers control of dwarf bunt and early-season foliar diseases such as rust, Septoria and powdery mildew.
- Maxim™, providing broad spectrum disease control in potatoes, corn, peas, and beans.
- Trigard®, providing maggot control for onions.

Ciba's existing seed treatment products are Apron® for control of systemic downy mildew, seed rot and damping-off diseases, and Concep®, a seed dressing to protect grain or forage sorghum from the phytotoxic effects of metolachlor herbicide. Both have been marketed since the early 1980s.



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Telephone (216) 893-2732
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