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Bug off! Fly away!

Controlling flies on your cattle

Spring has arrived and the warming temperatures bring new life, including flies. Controlling these pesky insects can be irritating for cattle farmers.

There are many good products available to assist in fly control but they need to be applied properly to get the expected results. Like deworming, we tend to apply insecticides when it is convenient for us not when they will be most effective. Careful planning and application of fly control products is the most cost effective way to manage flies.

Insecticide ear tags have been used for many years as a primary method to control flies on cattle during the summer. However, just applying an ear tag in the spring will not provide effective control for the entire summer.

Research has shown that the best time to apply insecticide tags is when there are at least 100 horn flies per animal. Unfortunately, many people apply fly tags in spring prior to pasture turn out or when pre-breeding shots are given. Normally during this time there are insufficient fly numbers to warrant applying ear tags. Since most fly tags only last 12-15 weeks, application in May will mean that coverage in August and September when fly

numbers are relatively high will not be sufficient.

It is also important to understand what flies you are wanting to control.

Fly tags are primarily designed to control horn flies. Horn flies spend most of their time on the head of the animal and only leave to lay eggs in fresh cow manure. Therefore, insecticide ear tags are a very effective control mechanism for horn flies, but not for face flies.

Many producers want to utilize fly tags to eliminate face flies as a way to control pink-eye in cattle. Face flies spend most of their time off the animal resting on vegetation and only visit the animal for brief periods of time to feed. There is a lower concentration of insecticide that migrates from the tag to the lower face so most face flies won't accumulate a toxic dose the short time they are feeding.

If face fly control for pinkeye is your primary concern, plan on using insecticide wipes to apply insecticide where it is needed.

If biting flies, such as stable flies and horse flies, are a concern, then other fly control methods will be needed. This types of fly can transmit anaplasmosis between cattle. These biting insects are common on body and legs of cows not near the head. Insecticide cattle

rub or sprays are more effective for controlling these flies.

Cattle farmers that are going to apply insecticide ear tags this year should remember some key details.

- Apply tags when fly numbers have reached an action threshold of 100 flies per animal.
- Use 2 tags per cow.
- Rotate between pyrethroid- and organophosphate-based insecticides to minimize resistance.
- Remove ear tags in the fall to minimize future resistance.
- Don't forget to utilize other control methods that best suit the type of fly you're trying to manage.

EPC adds new commissioners

Iowa cattle producers will have another understanding ear at the Iowa Environmental Protection Commission after a recent appointment by Governor Terry Branstad. The governor appointed Cindy Greiman, Garner, to fill a vacant position that needed to be held by a person in commerce or finance. Greiman is a Monsanto sales representative, who is married to Ed Greiman, ICA president-elect.

Another new face that will join EPC on May 1 is Max Smith of Knoxville. His

family runs Smith Fertilizer and Grain. Smith will replace Dolores Mertz of Algona. The former state representative served one year on the EPC, and she has since been appointed to the Iowa Racing & Gaming Commission.

Other EPC commissioners with a deep understanding of the cattle industry are chairman Dave Petty, Eldora (a former ICA president); and Nancy Couser, Nevada, whose family runs Couser Cattle Company.

Huber Slats

1497 - 170th St. • Wellman, IA 52356
Bill Huber • Ph. 319-646-2907

Fenceline bunks

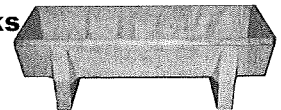
Key Benefits



- Acts as both a feeder & a fence for human protection
- Rounded interiors reduce feed waste
- Camphor edges reduce neck abrasions
- Bunks align to form any length
- Bunks are poured with 7,500 psi concrete
- Reinforced with solid rebar frame welded in place
- Optional concrete ends with drain holes available
- Features recessed post to prevent cattle from rubbing on post or cable
- Cable shim reduces wear & lengthens the life of cable
- Concrete step poured in the end of each bunk provides support for adjacent bunk
- Optional end steps are also available

Yard bunks

Key Benefits



- Allows livestock to feed from both sides and ends.
- Rounded interiors reduce feed waste and prevent damage from freezing.
- Rounded camphor edges reduce neck abrasions.
- Solid concrete ends feature drain holes. Drain holes may be plugged for use as a waterer.
- Concrete footing poured on the end of each bunk keeps feed at the appropriate height.
- Bunks are poured with 7,500 psi concrete using 3/8-inch aggregate reinforced with solid 1/2" rebar on 6"x 6" wire mesh squares.