Coccidiosis Control in Goats and Sheep

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Coccidiosis- what causes it?

• Not a bacteria, virus or roundworm
• Single cell protozoa
• Multiple coccidia species
  – Some noninfective
  – Some moderately infective
  – Some highly infective
Coccidiosis- what causes it?

- Strains of coccidia are animal specie specific—some very limited crossover between sheep and goats
- Always present in the herd/flock
- Most adult animals carry coccidia
- Present in small intestine
- Adults have a level of immunity to infection—sheep more so than goats
Coccidia Life Cycle

- Quite complicated - many stages
- 21 days in length
- Coccidia proliferate inside epithelial cells of small intestine
- This process damages the cells of the small intestine
- Oocytes (eggs) released via feces into environment
Coccidiosis Life Cycle

- Oocysts go through a process called sporulation (hatching)
- Warmth and moisture enhance sporulation
- Infective - 14 to 17 days after ingestion - symptoms
- Very resistant to disinfectants
- Sun and dry best
Coccidia Symptoms
Young animals
Stress
Over crowding- barn
3-6 wks
Weaning- pasture
Other Signs

• Stomach pain
• Decreased appetite
• Dehydration
• Rectal straining- can lead to prolapse
• Chronic poor doers- small intestine damage
• Fecal exams not reliable- post mortems are
Treatment of Coccidiosis

• Work with a veterinarian- most drugs not FDA approved in goats and sheep
  – Dosage rate, length of trt, best drug, withdrawal
• Isolate individual animals
• May have to mass treat remainder of group
Treatment of Coccidia

Albon (sulfadimethoxine)*
- 25 mg/lb BW Day 1, 12.5 mg/lb for Days 2-5
- 12.5% solution for drinking water
- 7 to 21 day withdrawal

Corid (amprolium)*
- 10 mg/lb BW for 5 days
- 9.6% solution, or 20% soluble powder
- 1 day meat withdrawal

* Not approved in goats or sheep; extra label drug use
Prevention of Coccidiosis

- Sanitation first course of action- oocysts spread in feces
- Clean barn- especially before lambing/kidding
- Keep dry- adequate bedding
- Prevent contamination of feed and water
- No feeding on ground
Prevention of Coccidiosis

- Feed coccidiostats- use as preventive before known times of susceptibility
- Monensin (Rumensin)- approved for goats
- Lasalocid (Bovatec)- approved for sheep
- Decoquinate (Decox)- approved for sheep & goats
Barn kidding/lambing time

• Ewes/does shedding oocytes
• Kids/lambs not eating enough feed to get preventative level of coccidiostat
• Feed coccidiostat in late gestation to lower the level of environmental contamination
• At least 21 days before to be effective
Pasture raised

• Mass treat in water at weaning with amprolium or sulfa drug with guidance from a veterinarian
• Start kids/lambs on feed with a coccidiostat at least 21 days before weaning
Summary

- Coccidia are present in all operations
- Prevention is best course of action to susceptible young animals
- Sanitation is important
- Prevent by limiting oocyte contamination with coccidiostats
- Work with a Veterinarian to prevent and treat