External Parasites in Goats & Sheep

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External Parasites

• Most common external parasites in goats & sheep include:
  • Biting lice
  • Sucking lice
  • Mites
  • Nose or nasal bots
  • Keds
Lice in goats and sheep

• Symptoms of lice
• Irritating to animals
  – Excessive rubbing, scratching, itching
  – Biting at self
  – Grooming behavior
  – Raw areas
Common Lice of Goats & Sheep

**Biting Lice – 3 main species**

- Feeds on *hair and skin debris*
- The head is large and mouth parts are adapted to chewing
- Prefer to live at the base of the tail, between legs, on shoulders, head, neck and along the back but can appear anywhere with heavy infestation.

**Biting Lice-order Mallophaga**
Common Lice of Goats & Sheep

Sucking Lice - 3 main species

- Sucking Lice only parasitize mammals
- Sucking lice have narrow heads with piercing mouth parts that are retracted when not feeding.
- Blood feeders
- Can cause anemia with heavy infestation

Sucking Lice-order Anoplura

[Image: Sucking Louse by Karin Christensen]
Lice cont.

• Lice are generally transmitted from one animal to another by direct contact.
• The most common means of introduction into herds is by bringing in infested animals or co-mingling.
• Lice are worst in winter
• Stressed animals more susceptible
• Animals in high density situations
Lice control

• Quarantine new animals for at least 2 weeks and treat if needed
• Expect the highest populations in the winter and early spring- treatment best then
• Sucking lice can be treated with ivermectin, moxidectin or insecticide
• 2 treatments- 2 weeks apart- 2\textsuperscript{nd} treatment gets eggs that hatch
Lice control cont.

• Biting lice have to be treated with insecticide
• Depending on product- probably best to treat 2 times- 2 weeks apart- egg hatching
Lice Control products

• Check to see if products are labeled for goats, sheep
• If not, consult with a Veterinarian for dosage and withdrawal times
• Ivermectin and moxidectin not approved for goats, but are in sheep (drench form only, not approved as control for external parasites)
• Some of the pour on insecticides are not approved, some are
Insecticide Treatments

- Pour-on, sprays, dips, aerosols
- Pour-ons usually most effective, most require 2 trts.
- Many are permethrin based. Some trade names include:
  - BackSide, Boss, Catron, Ectrin, Expar, etc.
- Differ in concentration
- Check approved status, read label for directions and withdrawal, consult with a veterinarian
Mites

• Several species of mites affect goats and sheep
• Ear mites, follicle mite, scabies mite most common
• Follicle mite causes demodecic mange
• Scabies mite causes sarcoptic mange
• Mites burrow beneath skin or in hair or wool follicle
• Irritation and itching - results in forming of scab
• Ivermectin is effective against
Keds

- Often referred to as the sheep tick, but is really a wingless fly
- Sucks blood, spread by direct contact
- Treated with pour on insecticides, ivermectin or moxidectin
Nose Bots

• Symptoms
  – Discharge from nostrils
  – Head shaking
  – Teeth grinding
  – Snorting with head to ground

• Larvae migrate up nostrils, feed on mucous and mucous membranes

• Migrate out after development

• Ivermectin treatment after frost
• Again, check labels to see dosage rates, precautions, withdrawal times
• Work with a veterinarian to establish a control program