

Topic of the Month

Parasite control

As we head into spring, we are still feeling the effects of last year's unusually wet summer. The wet ground and lack of sunshine provided a very favorable environment for parasite egg survival. It also led to very poor forages, which has resulted in poor production, reproduction, and reduced body condition in our herds.

Spring is an ideal time to combat parasitic infections. Many cattle will be heading out to pasture and when they start eating fresh grass, dormant parasite larvae will start reproducing and laying eggs. About six weeks after that, there will be another hatch of larvae. This information is useful in designing a deworming strategy.

Springtime deworming should involve a feed through dewormer such as Safeguard. We are primarily targeting gastrointestinal parasites with this deworming and a feed through dewormer will have much greater efficacy against these worms than a pour-on, which is more useful for treating lice or mange, or an injectable dewormer.

While there are some general principles to developing a deworming protocol, this is something that should be tailored to your herd. It is an important discussion to have because parasites are one of the most easily prevented and treated causes of lost production and death loss in livestock.

Commodity Futures

Prices

As of March 31, 2019

| | |
|--------------------|--------------|
| Corn | \$3.56/bu |
| Soybean Meal | \$306.50/ton |
| Milk (Class III) | \$15.06/cwt |
| Beef (Live cattle) | \$125.70/cwt |

Practice News & Upcoming Events

- White Oak will be hosting a Beef Quality Assurance meeting in conjunction with the Pennsylvania Beef Council and Rob's Rations. The meeting date has been set for Wednesday, April 24 at 6pm. This meeting is not only for beef producers. Since most dairy animals will also enter the food chain as meat animals, some markets require dairy farmers to participate in meat quality programs such as BQA or the FARM program. For additional details, see the enclosed flyer.

In The News

- In late March, Governor Tom Wolf announced that farmland owners in 61 of Pennsylvania's 67 counties are eligible for disaster relief resistance from the US Department of Agriculture because of the record rainfall amounts we received last year. For more information, producers should contact their local FSA office. The Somerset office can be reached at 814-445-6174.
- Since mid-March, the midwestern US has been experiencing severe flooding. This has devastated agriculture, threatened the safety of wells, and disrupted transportation. There is speculation that this could cause the beef price to rise by as much as a dollar a pound. Several organizations have already begun taking material donations out to Nebraska to help people in need, and there will undoubtedly be additional opportunities to donate if you are interested.