EFFECT OF A SPRING-TIME DEWORMING PROGRAM ON STRONGYLE EGG OUTPUT IN WEANED CALVES FROM EASTERN SOUTH DAKOTA

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ABSTRACT

Many South Dakota cattle producers are adopting spring-time deworming programs in attempts to limit economic losses caused by strongyle nematodes in their grazing cattle. These programs are designed to limit contamination of pastures with strongyles juveniles for the next grazing season. There have been no studies in South Dakota that have measured the effectiveness of these programs at limiting pasture contamination. Therefore, a study was conducted during the fall of 2003 to compare the egg-output of spring-born calves from herds whose cows had been treated with Dectomax (or Ivermectin) at the beginning of the summer grazing season. Two veterinary clinics from eastern South Dakota selected cattle producers whose herds were either using a spring-time deworming program or not using this type of program, but only samples from 5 treated herds and 4 untreated herds were received. For each herd, 20 fecal samples were collected from randomly-selected calves at the end of the grazing season (September-October). The samples were stored at 4°C until analyzed for the presence of strongyle nematode eggs using a standard sugar floatation technique. The mean number of eggs for the untreated herds ranged from 5.5 to 41.6 eggs/gram (EPG). The mean egg output for these 4 untreated herds was 27.15 (S.D. 16.36). The mean number of eggs for the treated herds ranged from 0.0 to 18.6 EPG, and the mean egg output for the 5 treated herds was 6.50 (S.D. 7.53) EPG. These values were not quite significantly different at the p<0.05 level (p=0.064) based upon a Mann-Whitney statistical T-Test.