

FLY SEASON - A review of fly control methods and products

It is that time of year again and the battle over flies continues! A high fly load decreases animal comfort and causes cattle to expend energy on fending off flies, instead of resting and eating. Their decreased comfort and extra energy expenditure decreases feed intakes and impacts milk production/components and weight gain in young stock. Each dairy farm must make a unique fly control plan that is designed for their facilities and management system. Good fly management also includes eliminating or managing fly breeding areas in and around barns. This includes pack/bedding management, manure storage management and eliminating moist, decaying organic matter like spilled feed, rotting old hay, open milk replacer, wet areas in the yard, and long grasses around the barn.

Here are some tools to help control your fly population:

1. Cleanliness: eliminate moist organic matter that provides a fly breeding ground.
2. Air movement: strong even airflow through your barn prevents flies from being able to land on cattle.
3. Fly traps and Sticky tapes: These help to reduce the adult fly population. Use them in low air flow area like the milk house where flies will land on them.
4. Chemicals: There are several chemicals available to be used both on the cow and in the environment. Boss Pour On is a pour on insecticide used on lactating and non-lactation dairy cattle, up to every 2 weeks through the fly season. Tempo 20 WP is a surface spray insecticide for use in livestock barns for the control of flies. This is a powdered product that is diluted into a hand pressurized sprayer. Spray indoor well-ventilated areas where flies like to congregate like sunny window ledges, doors, or walkways. It provides rapid pest knock down and long residual activity when used indoors.

Remember reducing flies in the calf area is important too! Allowing good airflow through hutches and through the calf barn to prevent flies from landing. Treating the inside of hutches or pens with Tempo before a calf goes in can reduce flies and make happier calves. Also, ask our technicians while they are out dehorning to include Boss Pour On application of calves at dehorning.

Consult with your herd veterinarian to set up or improve your fly control program. Also read and follow product label instructions

Lisa Sharko, DVM

Upcoming Stat Holdidays

The clinic will be closed Victoria Day Weekend, May 20-22. As always, veterinarians will be available 24-7 for emergency service. The Saturday fee schedule will remain unchanged from non-stat weekends.

Fly Control

Have you heard the buzz? Large animal technicians are now offering fly prevention in combination with dehorning services. Ask your large animal tech for more information!

