

**HILL FARM RESEARCH STATION**  
**APRIL 24, 2008**  
**FIELD DAY SUMMARY REPORT**

**COMMODITY:** Beef Cattle

**TITLE:** Evaluation of External and Internal Parasite Control with Spring-calving Cows and Calves

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**TAKE HOME MESSAGE:**

Results from this study suggest that the greatest benefit in calf growth resulted when deworming occurred during the summer when calves were 4 months of age and older. Furthermore, this study revealed that no improvement in cow-calf performance was realized with horn fly control due to insecticidal resistance exhibited by horn flies, especially at the Hill Farm Research Station.

**PROBLEM / TOPIC:**

Research investigating the combined effects of horn fly and internal parasite control for cow-calf production is limited. The objectives of this study were to determine the effects of: 1) horn fly control; 2) internal parasite control; and 3) combination of horn fly and internal parasite control on preweaning calf growth and cow performance.

**ACTION:**

A total of 758 cow-calf records were collected from two locations in Louisiana (Hill Farm Research Station, Homer, and Reproductive Biology Center, St. Gabriel) over a 3-year period. The treatments were: (1) no horn fly or internal parasite control; (2) horn fly control (on cows only) administered in late May with insecticidal ear tags; (3) internal parasite control (on calves only) administered in late May, mid-July and late August (each calf received fenbendazole at recommended dosages); and (4) both horn fly and internal parasite control administered as stated above. Trial lengths ranged from 118 to 127 days (late May to early October (weaning)). Cows and calves were weighed and scored for body condition (cows only) at the start of the trial, in mid-July, and at weaning. Cows were palpated for pregnancy at weaning. Weekly horn fly counts were conducted. Calf fecal samples were collected at the start of the trial, mid-July, late August, at weaning, 7-14 days after the start of the trial, and after late August dewormings for efficacy assessment of the dewormer.

**IMPACT:**

Cows treated for horn flies had populations under the economic threshold throughout most of the study; however, the level of control was marginal with over 100 flies per animal. There was no response in calf weight gain from horn fly control. Effective control of internal parasites in calves was maintained throughout the study based on fecal egg counts. Calf weight gain response from internal parasite control was observed only after the mid-July deworming when calves were at least 4 months of age or older. Horn fly or internal parasite control did not influence cow productivity.