

FLY CONTROL IN CATTLE BARNS

Flies are a persistent challenge in agricultural settings. Effectively controlling and reducing fly populations in cattle barns can improve the comfort and well-being of both cattle and handlers, reduce the risk of disease transmission, and enhance profitability by minimizing fly-related stress and weight loss in cattle.

TYPES OF FLIES

There are several types of flies that affect cattle, and each creates different problems for your herd. Because different flies target different areas of the animal, it is important to identify which species are present so you can choose the most effective control methods.



Horn Fly

Haematobia irritans

Areas: back, shoulders, sides, & belly

Risks: irritation, blood loss, weight loss



Face Fly

Musca autumnalis

Areas: Eyes, nose, and mouth

Risks: irritation of sensitive skin, disease transmission (pink eye)



Stable Fly

Stomoxys calcitrans

Areas: Lower legs, flanks, & belly

Risks: irritation, blood loss, weight loss, disease transmission



New World Screwworm Fly

Cochliomyia hominivorax

Areas: Open wounds, mouth, eyes, ears, & genitals

Risks: irritation, infection, weight loss

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UNL Beef: Horn
Flies and
Control Options



UNL Beef:
Controlling Flies
on Pastured Cattle



CDC: About
the New World
Screwworm



Folio3: Cattle
Fly Control
Methods

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METHODS TO MANAGE FLIES

Fly management can take many forms, and the most effective programs use a combination of control methods. By targeting flies during different stages of their life cycle, from eggs and larvae to adults, you can reduce both existing populations and those yet to develop. Although it's impossible to eliminate all flies, taking a comprehensive approach can greatly decrease their numbers and minimize their effects on cattle.

Inspect the cattle and yourself regularly.

- Check for wounds, irritation, or signs of infection.
 - Wounds on cattle must be cleaned and treated immediately with approved insecticides or topical protectants. If New World Screwworm infestation is suspected, contact your veterinarian immediately.
 - Handlers should cover all wounds completely. For signs of infection or infestation with eggs or larvae seek medical care immediately.

Keep the environment as clean as possible.

- Remove manure from stalls daily
- Keep the environment dry (remove wet bedding and standing water)
- Pick up any spilled feed
- Sanitize feeding areas
- Keep any compost piles at least 200 ft from cattle area and turn the piles regularly

Use environmental management tools.

- Hang reusable fly traps between 20-30 ft away from livestock area. Having traps too close will draw flies to the cattle.
- Strategically place dust bags, back rubbers and pest oilers in areas where the cattle must walk through daily to encourage use.
- Keep fans blowing on cattle to help keep flies from landing on them.
- Install fly zappers, fly strips, and stick traps near pens.

Use chemical-based controls such as:

- Low pressure sprayers and mist blowers to apply insecticide sprays. Use gloves, goggles and if recommended on the label, a respirator, when using insecticides.
- Insecticide eartags
- Pour on products
- Oral larvicide and other feeding additives such as Insect Growth Regulators (IGRs)

Consider using parasitic wasps.

- You can buy parasitic wasps that lay eggs in the fly pupae, killing them before they mature.
- Be careful with insecticides when using this method since it could kill the wasps.

OTHER IMPORTANT THINGS TO NOTE

- Rotate the active ingredients you use to prevent insect resistance
- Reapply chemical-based controls as heat can affect effectiveness
- Do research to find the best method for you and your cattle.

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