

Deworming Show Pigs

BY Dr. Daniel Hendrickson, D.V.M., Four Star Veterinary Service (765.468.6099)



Parasites in pigs seem to be a never ending battle especially external parasites like mange. This article will talk about internal and external parasites and how we control them along with the best prevention and treatment protocols. To begin, let's discuss external parasites which would include mange and lice. Mange in pigs is caused by a parasite called *sarcoptes scabiei* var *suis* which is only specific to swine. It is a mite that is very easily transmitted from pig to pig by close contact that then buries itself into the skin where it lays its eggs. This causes irritation to the skin and will cause bumps, redness, itching, and rubbing. Typically, most bumps can be found on the ears, between the front legs on the chest, along the underline, and between the back legs where there is less hair and the skin is the softest. We focus on treatment based on the life cycle of the mite. After an egg is laid by the female, it takes around 5 days for the egg to hatch and become a larvae. Within 10 days, that larvae will become a nymph and then an adult in which it can begin to lay eggs again.

Treatment can include both topical and injectable compounds when trying to eliminate mange from a pig. The most common topical is Prolate/Lintox HD™* and the most common injectable is Ivermectin or Dectomax®*. Since these products do not kill the eggs, a 2 dose program is necessary to eliminate the mange after the eggs have hatched and before they mature and are able to start laying eggs again. The protocol that I typically follow is the following: Day 1 - Prolate/Lintox HD and Ivermectin or Dectomax, Day 6 - Prolate/Lintox HD, and Day 12 - Prolate/Lintox HD and Ivermectin or Dectomax again. If the outbreak is severe through the barn, it may be necessary to change out the bedding and/or use prolate on the bedding as well. If you are not seeing any clinical signs of mange, then a treatment every 3 to 4 weeks should suffice.

The other external parasite that we occasionally come across, but not near as often as mange, is lice. Lice in pigs is called *haematopinus suis*. They are very easily seen crawling on the skin and in the ears. Some dusts can kill the lice, but luckily the same treatment that works on mange will also work on lice, so I recommend following the same protocol.

Now let's discuss internal parasites. I won't go into all the different internal parasites due to there being so many different ones, but will focus more on treatment and why we must use different products to cover all the types of internal parasites. To list a few that we see would include large roundworms, whipworms, nodular worms, threadworms, kidney worms, lungworms, stomach worms, and tapeworms. The most common dewormers that we use in showpigs is Ivermectin or Dectomax and Fenbendazole (Safe-Guard®*). Typically, we recommend internal parasite treatment once every 3 to 4 weeks while having the pig on feed in the showbarn.

To fully control all internal parasites we must use both an Ivermectin like product and Fenbendazole (Safe-Guard®*). Ivermectin is very good for all external parasites (mange and lice), roundworms, and nodular worms. It is not effective on many of the other internal parasites. Fenbendazole products are effective on most of the internal parasites, but has zero effectiveness against external parasites. This is why it is important to use both types of products to have the broadest control for all external and internal parasites to make sure your pig is performing while you try to maximize your pig's potential.

For more information on MoorMan's® ShowTec® ShowGuard™ Dewormer with Fenbendazole (Safe-Guard), please contact a show feed specialist.

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