

9-1951

EC1564 Horn Fly Control

Robert W. Helm

Follow this and additional works at: <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/extensionhist>

Helm, Robert W., "EC1564 Horn Fly Control" (1951). *Historical Materials from University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension*. 2683.
<http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/extensionhist/2683>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Extension at DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln. It has been accepted for inclusion in Historical Materials from University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln.

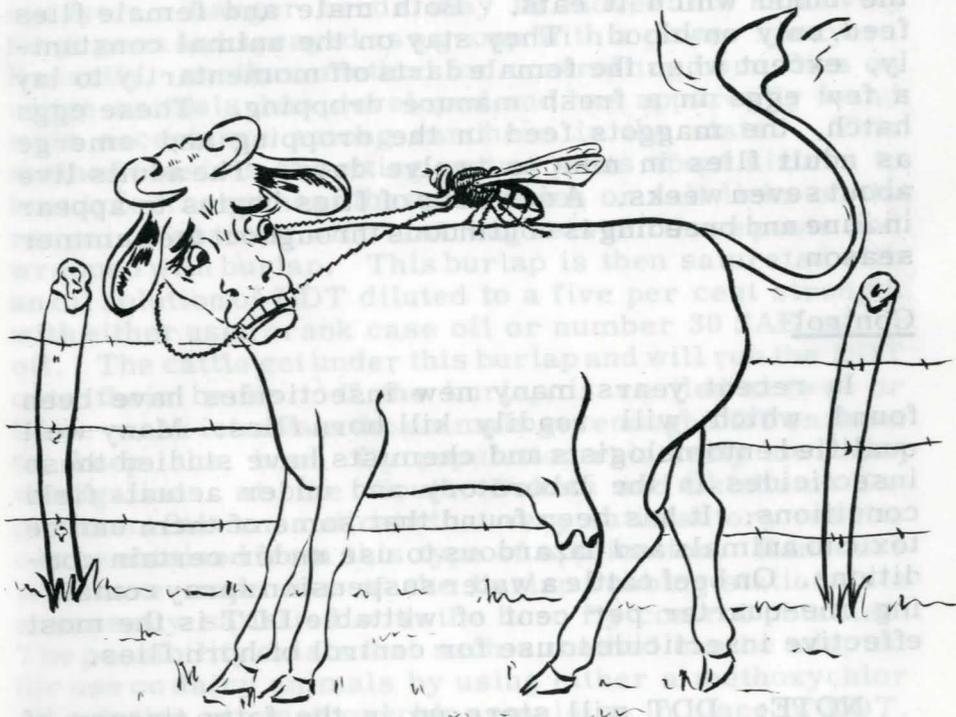
S
85 SEPTEMBER 1951

Department of Entomology
University of Nebraska
Lincoln, Nebr.

E. C. 1564

E7
#1564
c.1

HORN FLY CONTROL



EXTENSION SERVICE
UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE
AND U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
COOPERATING
W. V. LAMBERT, DIRECTOR

Horn Fly Control

Robert W. Helm, Extension Entomologist

The horn fly, often referred to as "that little fly that rides on the back of the cow", is one of the most important biting and blood sucking flies found on Nebraska cattle. At the same time the horn fly is now the easiest fly to control.

Life History and Habits

Adult horn flies are about half the size of the common house fly. They are grayish black in color and have a piercing beak. With this beak, the horn fly is able to pierce the hide of the animal and draw the blood which it eats. Both male and female flies feed only on blood. They stay on the animal constantly, except when the female darts off momentarily to lay a few eggs in a fresh manure dropping. These eggs hatch, the maggots feed in the dropping and emerge as adult flies in nine to twelve days. The adults live about seven weeks. A new crop of flies begins to appear in June and breeding is continuous throughout the summer season.

Control

In recent years many new insecticides have been found which will readily kill horn flies. Many well qualified entomologists and chemists have studied these insecticides in the laboratory and under actual field conditions. It has been found that some of them can be toxic to animals and hazardous to use under certain conditions. On beef cattle a water suspension spray containing one-quarter per cent of wettable DDT is the most effective insecticide to use for control of horn flies.

NOTE: DDT will store up in the fatty tissues of animals and dairy cows will secrete it in their milk. Since most of our young infants live almost entirely on milk, we do not want to run the risk of poisoning them with any insecticide. It is strongly advised that you do not use DDT on dairy animals or animals ready for slaughter. Methoxychlor (DMDT) can be used at the

same strength, one-quarter per cent in a water suspension spray, with comparative safety on dairy animals or animals ready for slaughter.

Practical control of horn flies can be obtained for a period of two to three weeks by wetting the backs of the animals with one of these insecticides. About one-half gallon of spray per animal is necessary. If you begin treatment when the flies appear during June, three or four treatments will give good control.

The equipment necessary to make the applications of sprays will depend largely on the size of the herd to be treated. Small herds, twenty five animals or less, and dairy animals, may be sprayed individually with a three-gallon compressed air sprayer or a wheel barrow type sprayer. Larger herds may be moved into relatively large pens and sprayed as a group with a power sprayer. Recently, another method for controlling horn flies on range animals has developed and has apparently found wide acceptance among ranchers in the state. This method consists of setting up two posts about sixteen to twenty feet apart near the water holes or salt licks on the range. A chain or wire is strung between these posts and wrapped with burlap. This burlap is then saturated with an oil solution of DDT diluted to a five per cent strength with either used crank case oil or number 30 SAE motor oil. The cattle get under this burlap and will rub the DDT onto their backs. If the burlap is reoiled at two- or three-week intervals the animals get enough DDT on them to keep the horn fly population relatively low. Investigations at the South Dakota and Oklahoma Experiment Stations indicate that very satisfactory results can be obtained from this type of application. Ranchers who have made use of the burlap rubbing stations are apparently satisfied with the horn fly control obtained. The possibility exists that such a method can be adapted for use on dairy animals by using either a methoxychlor oil solution or a methoxychlor emulsion in place of DDT.