

FAMACHA EVALUATION

FAMACHA is a new system designed to control the parasite *Haemonchus Contortus* in sheep and goats. This parasite is one of the most problematic among small ruminants. It is an intestinal parasite that survives by sucking the blood of its host. The parasite actually lives in the abomasums of sheep and goats, also known as the true stomach. The parasite sucks large amounts of blood and the result is a severely anemic animal that most frequently dies. The FAMACHA system was developed in South Africa by Francois Malan. There is a huge problem with worm control in South Africa in the meat goat industry, and the FAMACHA system was developed as a means of controlling *Haemonchus Contortus* in small ruminants.

As in controlling any parasite, resistance to dewormers is a huge problem when treating *Haemonchus*. It is this problem that hinders the ability of many sheep and goat producers to be successful in their industry. Instead of treating every animal in the herd or flock, FAMACHA allows the producer only to treat the animals that truly need to be treated for *Haemonchus Contortus*. This aids in lowering the resistance among the flock to the dewormers that inevitably occurs when animals are wormed on a regular basis.



Anemia, as mentioned above, is the main symptom caused by infection with *Haemonchus Contortus*. The FAMACHA system relies on this symptom to decide which animals need to be dewormed and which do not. The system relies on a system of diagnosis relating to the color of the eyelid of the animal. The University of Kentucky has developed a chart showing the different levels of anemia (*See adjacent chart), and at what levels the animal is safe to go on without being treated for *Haemonchus Contortus*, and at what levels the animal is at risk and should be dosed to get rid of the worm.

The main technique that must be mastered in order to successfully utilize the FAMACHA system is being able to recognize anemia in the eyelid of the animal. It is relatively easier for two people to move quickly through a herd of

