

## \*FAMACHA<sup>®</sup>

FAMACHA<sup>®</sup> is a novel idea for the treatment and control of *Haemonchus contortus* (Barber's Pole worm) in goats and sheep. FAMACHA<sup>®</sup> measures levels of anemia or blood loss (not fecal egg counts) and treatment decisions are based on these levels. The system is available only through veterinarians who may train producers to receive certification to use the system.

A relatively small proportion (20 - 30%) of goats in most herds carry most of the worms and shed most of the eggs. This is also true for sheep, cattle, horses and others. Subsequently, a large proportion of goats can live with their small worm burdens, likely never necessitating being dewormed (or at least quite infrequently).

By identifying the goats that consistently have higher populations of worms and greater likelihood of obvious parasitism, it is possible to treat them specifically without treating the remainder of the herd. This also allows for culling of chronically parasitized animals, creating a more resistant herd.

*H. contortus* are blood suckers and in heavily parasitized goats will result in anemia. The level of anemia can be estimated by an examination of the mucous membranes surrounding the eyes.

### Advantages of the FAMACHA<sup>®</sup> system include:

- Decrease in the amount and frequency of treatment for the majority of the herd.
- Slows the development of anthelmintic (dewormer) resistance.
- Allows owners to identify and cull chronically heavily parasitized goats.
- It is relatively cheap, if labor costs are not considered.
- As goats are examined more frequently, other problems that might have gone unnoticed are identified earlier.

### Precautions of the FAMACHA<sup>®</sup> system are:

- This system is only for *H. contortus* infestations. This is the primary internal parasite of goats in the southeastern U.S.
- HERD fecal egg counts should be monitored every 4-6 weeks.
- Other causes of anemia exist.
- Goats must be regularly monitored (every 2-3 weeks) to keep a check on developments.
- Some animals are *more susceptible* and may need special attention (kids, pregnant does).
- This system must be used in conjunction with a properly designed worm control program. **It cannot be used alone.**
- The FAMACHA<sup>®</sup> guide chart must be used during inspections of the eyes.
- Proper training is imperative before using this system.

**For more information, please have your veterinarian call (865) 974-5701  
or EMAIL: famacha@vet.uga.edu.**