

Pighealth BYTES

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Worm control II

Your own reference source on pig health

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Treatment options

The technical word for a wormer is an anthelmintic and no one anthelmintic is effective against all species of worm. The choice of anthelmintic to treat a worm problem is decided by the species of worm involved and the cost of the product. Routine treatment coupled to strategic surveillance is the best approach for farms that have previously experienced clinical disease.

Treatment reduces the number of egg producing adult worms and helps to minimise environmental contamination by worm eggs. The main anthelmintics include the following:

● Avermectins

Avermectins are derived from fermentation products of *Streptomyces avermitilis* and they act by stimulating the release of the inhibitory neurotransmitter gamma-aminobutyric acid, which inhibits neuromuscular transmission in the worm leading to paralysis and death. Its spectrum of activity covers most of the important species of worm, the notable exception being *Trichuris suis*. Avermectins are available in injectable and feed forms. They are also effective against many of the important exoparasites.

● Benzimidazole carbamates

Thiabendazole is well known but significantly less efficacious than flubendazole in pigs. This wormer works by inhibiting the uptake of glucose from the worm's gut which results in the worm's inability to manufacture ATP.

● Imidazothiazoles

Levamisole is typical of this group of wormers, but its activity against *T. suis* is limited.

● Organophosphate compounds

Dichlorvos is a good example and was the first broad spectrum anthelmintic for pigs. Its use is now banned in some countries. Dichlorvos can be incorporated into polyvinyl chloride pellets that enable a slow release of the wormer as it passes down the gut.

● Pyrantel tartrate

Pyrantel tartrate is the only tetrahydropyrimidine used in pigs and is used for the removal of adult and infective larval stages of *Ascaris*, *Oesophagostomum* and *Hyostrongylus*.

● Piperazine

This is an older generation of anthelmintic but one that is still widely used. Piperazine acts as a purge wormer and is efficacious in the removal of adult ascarids and nodular worms. It can be administered via the feed or water.

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