

Determining Intestinal Parasites to Enhance SET Learning in 4-H Animal Science Projects



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Background

Intestinal parasites live in the gastrointestinal tract of animals which may affect the health of the animal in relation to nutrition and performance and result in an economic loss for the producer. 4-H youth engaged in animal projects should be knowledgeable about clinical signs, diagnosis, treatment and general control measures.

Purpose

To introduce animal health related to intestinal parasite infection.



Opening Questions

- Have you ever used a microscope before?
- What are the parts of a compound microscope?
- What is a parasite?
- Are parasites good and/or bad?
- What types of parasites infect our animal projects?

Experiencing (“Do it”)

- Have youth collect fecal samples from their project animals
- What can you observe from your fecal sample?
- What is normal/abnormal looking fecal matter of your project animal?
- Perform the Fecal Floatation Activity.



Sharing (“What happened?”)

- What did you do?
- Why is it important to obtain a fresh fecal sample?
- Why is it important to agitate the fecal sample?
- Why is it important to use a saline solution?

Processing (“What’s Important?”)

- What did you see?
- What happened to the prepared slide over time?
- If you saw something interesting, what did you do?
- Were you able to identify an intestinal parasite?



Generalizing (“So What?”)

- What are clinical signs of infection exhibited by a sick animal?
- Can you make an association between behavior and a sick animal?
- How would intestinal parasites affect your project animal?
- Were you able to make a diagnosis?



Applying (“Now What?”)

- Why is it important to have a good laboratory technique?
- Do you feel your dewormer is working? Why/why not?
- Is intestinal parasite infection of your project animal a recurring issue?
- What are the considerations in treating or not treating your project animal?
- How does checking your project animal for intestinal parasites relate to quality assurance and/or bio-security practices?

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