



## Tick Disease and Prevention

November 16, 2022

This time of year we are seeing a lot of livestock and horses sick from ticks! Ticks can cause acute diseases in horses and livestock such as anaplasmosis. Signs of this disease are fever, decreased appetite, sluggish behavior, limb edema, and colic. Ticks can also cause chronic disease such as Lyme disease. Signs of live disease in horses and livestock include weight loss, unthriftiness, joint swelling, and arthritis.

Tick disease is diagnosed by blood testing and best treated by your veterinarian with courses of tetracycline antibiotics. Though treatable, tick disease can have long lasting effects and go undiagnosed for long periods of time. Because of this, the best way to keep your horses and livestock healthy from tick disease this time of year, is with prevention.

Tick Disease Prevention:

1. Environmental management
  - a. Keep animals in paddocks with short grass. Ticks tend to populate the tall grass. By keeping the paddocks and pastures below 6" tall, you are best able to decrease your animals' exposure to ticks.
  - b. Environmental sprays are helpful in keeping ticks away from the area, however, you want to make sure to use chemicals and concentrations of chemicals that are safe for your livestock. Make sure the company you use is aware of the species on the premises as to not use toxic products
2. Topical Treatments
  - a. Horses- Equispot is a topical product that is permethrin based and applied to the withers every two weeks. Some horses can have skin sensitivity to the product, so apply a small amount first. If there is no reaction within 24 hours you can use the complete dose.
  - b. Sheep, Goats, Camelids, and Cattle - Permethrin based topicals such as Ultraboss and Permethrin can be used as pour-on treatments. You can also use permethrin infused ear tags in the ears of cattle, or around collars for sheep and goats.
3. Lyme Vaccination
  - a. Vaccination for lyme disease is available for horses. This vaccine is administered in series of boosters three weeks apart, three months apart, and then every six months. Vaccination will not prevent exposure to lyme disease, but will prevent development of clinical disease.