

IN THE BEGINNING By the time customers walk into your store searching for fly relief, they have already most likely neglected the first line of defense against flies—keeping them from breeding in the first place.

No, it's not possible to kill every fly through best-practices manure management and moisture control, but most horse husbandry experts agree that's the place to start.

The key is to make life as miserable for flies as they make human and horse's lives.

Cleanliness is not only next to godliness, it's next to impossible where horses are concerned. Here's your chance to sell additions to fly control products.

Keep rakes, buckets, hay bags and similar products close to your fly control lineup, and don't miss the opportunity to remind customers that a few minutes of cleaning with effective tools can decrease the infestation of pesky flies measurably.

Several companies make a product generically called fly predators. They are tiny bugs in their own right that feed on the larvae of flies.

While they are not always available to you as a retailer for resale to customers, you can keep their material on hand and provide it as helpful information.

FIGHTING THE BATTLE

Flies that remain after all precautions are taken are the flies your customers will be spending the remainder of the summer fighting.

The arsenal of products available can be divided into two categories: those used

to treat the environment, and those used to treat and protect the horse.

Among the environmental controls are fly tape, traps and bait, sprays, foggers and electronic zappers.

Tape is perhaps one of the oldest methods of dealing with flies. It is decidedly low tech. A sticky substance coats the tape, flies are attracted to it and once they land, they aren't able to escape.

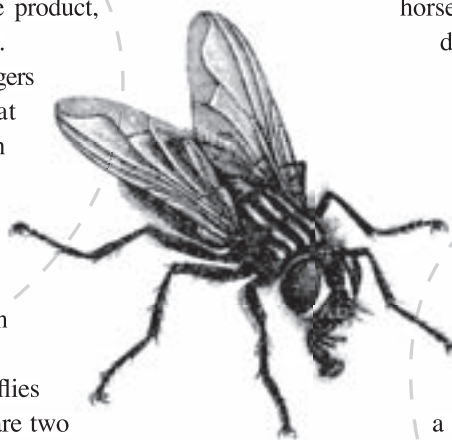
The biggest disadvantage is that the strips need to be taken down and disposed of regularly or they become unsightly and a health hazard.

Traps and baits contain a substance attractive to flies, which either leads to their being poisoned or trapped inside the product, such as a milk jug.

Sprays and foggers are used to treat large areas with insecticides designed to kill flies. Zappers generally use a neon light to attract flies and then electrocute them.

For controlling flies on horses, there are two major options: apply a repellent, or cover the horse to keep the flies away.

Repellants are most popularly purchased as sprays and wipes. You will want to stock sprays in both concentrate forms and in premixed and ready to use



for horse owners on the go. Wipes are generally used for fly protection around the head and other sensitive areas. It's also a good plan to stock applicator mitts since they are generally more cost effective than wipes or towelettes.

Spot applicators have also become increasingly popular in recent years, as have the all-natural products for those concerned about exposing their horses to chemicals.

An all-natural product may work fine in situations where flies are less intensive, but most consumers agree that when flies are at their worst, something stronger is called for.

Fly masks and sheets are among the most popular passive fly control methods. Masks protect a horse's eyes, ears and other sensitive parts of the face. Sheets prevent flies from landing on the horse. Sheets also serve double duty, providing sun protection as well as fly protection.

Fitting a mask or a sheet properly improves their effectiveness. A mask that flies can crawl inside of is probably more of an annoyance to a horse than the flies themselves.

Fly collars and leg bands have become popular, and they are less prone to malfunction or fit poorly.

Products to cover virtually the entire horse from the tip of his nose to the end of his tail are available for stocking.

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