

Coccidiosis ~ What is it and how did I treat it?

by Christopher Rowley, Goose Meadow Farm

Coccidiosis is caused by small parasites that multiply inside the host cells, mainly in the intestinal tract. There are three types, Eimeria, Isospora, and Cryptosporidia. Disease is common and widespread in suckling piglets but is seen occasionally in growing and finishing pigs. Coccidiosis should be suspected if there is a diarrhea problem in sucking pigs from 7-21 days of age that does not respond particularly well to antibiotics.

Here's my story:

Last winter I noticed 3 piglets in a litter with bright yellow scours. These piglets were 2 weeks old and since I had only encountered diarrhea in younger piglets I began treatment for what I assumed was E.coli scours. I treated the piglets for 3 days and saw no improvement. I decided to take one of the piglets to my veterinarian. As soon as the vet saw the diarrhea she says this is Coccidia related. She took a fecal sample and sure enough she was correct. Coccidia was indeed the culprit. The veterinarian prescribed Albon 5% Oral Suspension (Sulfadimethoxine). This is the same medication that is given to dogs and cats, and it's a tasty banana custard flavor. The dosage that my veterinarian recommended to me is 1cc per 4 pounds twice daily to piglets with diarrhea and once daily for piglets in the same litter with no signs of diarrhea. Treatment was recommended for 5 to 7 days. After 1 or 2 doses I no longer had to restrain the piglets for their medicine. They loved the flavor and would suck it from the syringe like it was a wonderful treat. All signs of diarrhea were gone after 2 to 3 days of treatment with the Albon.

We have recently learned of a product for prevention of Coccidia. The name of this product is *Baycox Piglet* (5% Toltrazuril) marketed by Bayer Animal Health New Zealand. The preventative dose is a single oral treatment of 1cc Baycox (5% Toltrazuril) per piglet at 3 to 6 days of age. While *Baycox Piglet* is not available in the USA we have found a 5% Toltrazuril that is available in this country. It is not labeled for piglets but labeled for horses for the treatment of Coccidia. The concentration of this 5% Toltrazuril available in the USA is exactly the same as the *Baycox Piglet* marketed in New Zealand. We have purchased this product and have begun to use it in our piglets at 3 to 6 days of age to hopefully prevent any further Coccidia issues. So far so good.

ThePigSite.com

BayerAnimal.co.nz

HorsePrerace.com/toltrazuril/