Get control of the flies before they control you!

Spring is here, and after the winter most of us experienced, many of us welcome the nice weather with open arms! With the arrival of spring comes the arrival of something else that all of us with rabbits, or other livestock know very well, flies. Now is the time to start your battle against these pesky creatures. If you do not have a problem yet, consider yourself lucky. If you are already experiencing a problem it is not too late to start initiating these tricks to get them under control.

No matter how clean you keep your barn, flies will be present. Cleaning out your barn daily helps; we rake our barn floor every day, but in most barns that is not a reality. Still removing as much of the rabbit droppings and discarded hay as often as possible is a huge help.

There are a couple of products on the market that have proved to be helpful to us; and by starting early I think we finally have a plan to keep them under control!

[Catchmaster.com](http://catchmaster.com/) offers several good products, at very reasonable prices, and most can be found at your local garden store or feed store. One of our favorites is the Pro Series Giant Fly Glue Trap. Hanging this in your barn allows you to roll out a small amount at a time then tear off the used portion to discard as needed. Another favorite is the long tube glue stick traps; both kinds work better than your little twisted fly strips. We get the long tube type glue traps, not the ones with the fly bait.

[Sweet PDZ](http://www.sweetpdz.com/) offers a great product that helps with odor and flies. After cleaning your floor or pans sprinkle a small amount on damp areas. Sweet PDZ helps absorb moisture, which also attracts flies, controls odors and helps control flies.

The final product that can be a big benefit in keeping flies under control is fly bait. Different brands can be found at most local feed stores, [Tractor Supply](http://tractorsupply.com/) or other farm related stores. Quickbayt or Golden Malrin are both good brands. Fly bait can be used a couple of ways. One is to pour some in a bowl and set in a corner of the barn. Another way, which is the way we like best, is to just scatter it lightly all over the barn floor; applied several times a week for the most effective result. I sprinkle a small amount on floor every morning and evening.

I know it sounds funny but I have a zip lock baggie hanging on our door with 3 or 4 pennies in it. I filled the baggie with about 2 inches of water then hung it on the screen with a zip tie or it can be hung from a nail in the doorway. I don’t know if it is dumb luck, or what, but it has seemed to help for 2 summers now.

Controlling flies takes work and consistency. Whatever method you settle on or products you choose to use, consistency is the key. Remember to change your glue traps or any trap often; sometimes once a week and use the fly bait constantly. Be sure to not get any in your rabbit's food or water dishes. Start now before flies run you out of your barn!

Controlling flies in livestock barn

Flies are just part of having livestock. If you don’t have flies in your barn yet it won’t be long because as the weather warms up the eggs start hatching. There is no way to completely eliminate flies but you can reduce the numbers.

A couple of years ago we had a horrible problem with flies. I tried everything! Well I finally put together a plan that got the problem somewhat under control. The following year I started preparing for the flies way earlier. In March I started spraying every day and it really seemed to help. Here are some tips to help keep your fly problem under control.

1. Clean out the barn! I know this is nearly impossible because no matter how much manure you pick up it seems to double, but get into the habit of at least once a week rake out the barn.
2. I.G. Regulator - a product our feed store recommended. It is a premises spray that helps control the eggs. It does not kill the adults but it helps new ones from hatching.
3. Permethrin 10% Concentrate – is actually for the live flies and is sprayed on all surfaces including animals.
4. I mix 1 oz of Permethrin and ½ oz of I.G. Regulator together in a ½ to 1 gallon sprayer. I spray EVERYTHING, feeders, buckets, ground, walls, sheep, lambs, and even the kids if they get in my way! Bottom line is don’t miss anything. I.G. is not actually meant to be sprayed on the animals but I never had anyone get sick. I just sprayed a fine mist over their backs as they were at the feeder.
5. We also hang those nasty sticky fly tapes around. They do help and they are cheap.
6. The plastic Trap n Toss are a little more expensive but worth it. We keep a couple of them hanging around also.

We used all the above together. We’ve tried some of the baits and we just did not have much luck with them until we tried them in the rabbit barn. But I’m sure we were not using the correctly because we were afraid to leave it out where the other animals could get to it.

