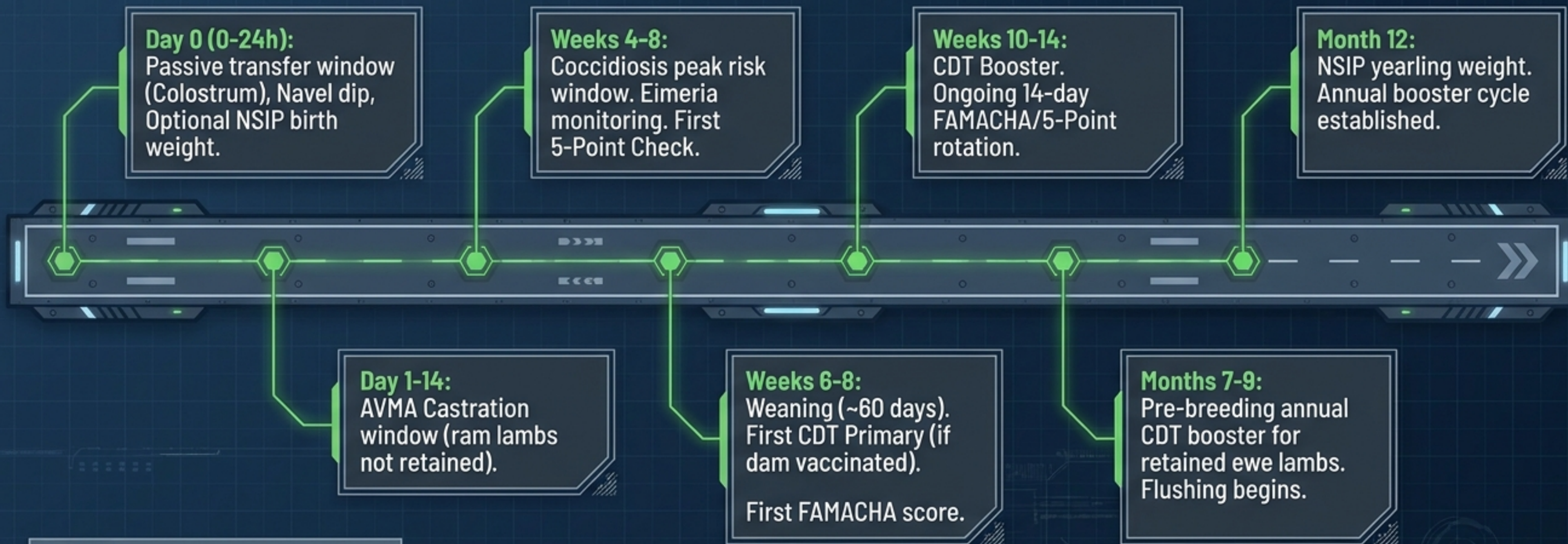


Katahdin First-Year Health & Operations

A Systems-Based Field Guide for Mid-Atlantic Flocks (0-365 Days)

SUBJECT: Post-Natal Management,
Immunization, and Parasite Ecology
SCOPE: 20-Ewe Scale, Pasture-Based
STATUS: Active Reference Document

The First 365 Days Follow a Predictable Operational Runway



Legend

This runway integrates Immunization, Parasitology, and Growth into a single path.

Maternal Vaccination Status Dictates the Lamb CDT Timeline

Was the dam correctly boosted 2 to 4 weeks before lambing?

YES


Condition: Colostrum carries protective titers that neutralize early vaccines.

- Step 1:** Primary Dose at 6 to 8 weeks (when colostrum immunity wanes).
- Step 2:** Booster Dose at 10 to 12 weeks (3 to 4 weeks after primary).

NO / UNKNOWN

Condition: Lamb is vulnerable from birth. Tetanus risk elevated.

- Step 1:** Primary Dose in Week 1.
- Step 2:** Second Dose in Week 5.
- Step 3:** Third Dose at 12 Weeks (anchors lasting protection).

 **The Tetanus Interlock:** Banding ram lambs creates an anaerobic wound. If banding at 1-14 days without maternal antibodies, immediate tetanus antitoxin is required.

Global Internet Advice Fails Against US Market Realities

Disease Target	Internet Advice	US Reality	Action Path
Footrot (<i>Dichelobacter nodosus</i>)	Use Footvax.	Not registered or distributed in the US.	Zinc sulfate footbaths, hoof trimming, culling.
Abortion (<i>Chlamydia/Campylobacter</i>)	Enzovax, Cevac, Mydiavac.	UK-only products; no labeled US equivalent.	Diagnostic lab submission, isolation, vet-directed tetracycline.
Soremouth/Orf (Zoonotic poxvirus)	Vaccinate all lambs.	Live virus permanently infects the farm.	⚠ Zoonotic Hazard: ⚠ Live vaccine causes painful human hand lesions.
Rabies (Raccoon-variant corridors)	Not for sheep.	IMRAB Large Animal is labeled for sheep.	Defensible biosecurity for retained breeding stock.

Extra-Label Drug Use Requires a Three-Pillar Legal Foundation

Sheep are classified as food animals. Using any drug outside its sheep label (e.g., Amprolium, oral ivermectin, many antibiotics) is illegal without all three pillars.

Legal Extra-Label Use

AMDUCA (The Law)

Animal Medicinal Drug Use Clarification Act. Authorizes off-label use only when no labeled alternative exists.

VCPR (The Gatekeeper)

Veterinarian-Client-Patient Relationship. The vet, not the producer, legally specifies the dose, route, and withdrawal time.

FARAD (The Database)

Food Animal Residue Avoidance Databank. The authoritative database for withdrawal times. Producers cannot query it directly; the vet must submit the request.

The first off-label drug decision is not the time to start your veterinary relationship.

Katahdins Possess a Measurable Genetic Head Start

Most Resistant

- Pure Caribbean Hair Breeds (St. Croix, Barbados Blackbelly, Gulf Coast Native)

Moderately Resistant

- Katahdins (Caribbean-derived but composite)

Least Resistant

- Wool Breeds (Suffolk, Hampshire, Dorset)

Metric 1: Weaning Fecal Egg Count (WFEC)
Heritability: ~0.19

Metric 2: Post-Weaning FEC (PFEC)
Heritability: ~0.24

Key Insight: Negative correlation with growth. Selecting for lower egg counts does not penalize growth; low-FEC lambs also wean heavier.

Action: Ram selection on negative FEC EBVs via NSIP is the highest-leverage genetic tool for a 20-ewe operation.

Refugia Dilutes Resistance by Leaving Worms in the Flock on Purpose

Blanket Treatment (The Old Way)

Deworming 100% of ewes kills all Green worms. Only Red super-bugs survive and breed. The drug becomes permanently useless.

✗



Strategic Treatment (The Modern Way)

Treating only clinically anemic animals leaves millions of Green worms in the pasture. They breed with the Red survivors, diluting the resistance gene pool.

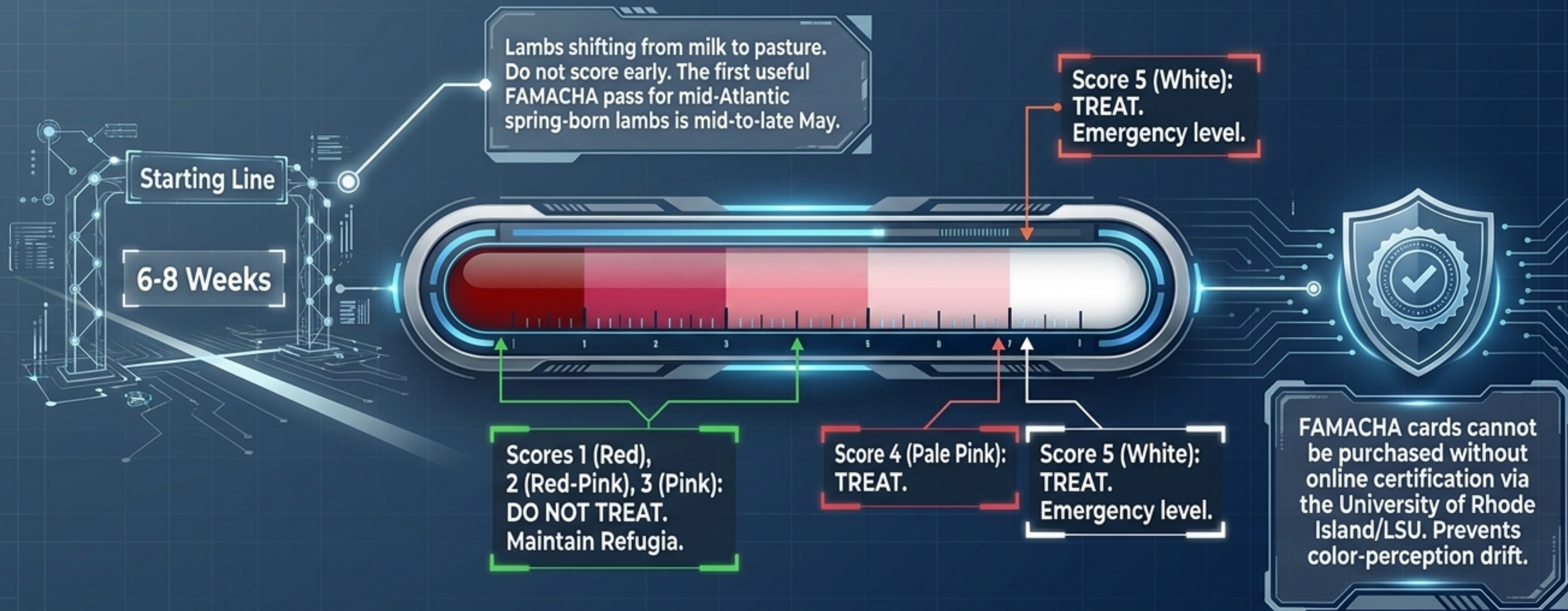
✓



Worm Species	1000	10000	100000
W. circumcincta	1000	10000	100000
W. circumcincta	1000	10000	100000
W. circumcincta	1000	10000	100000
W. circumcincta	1000	10000	100000
W. circumcincta	1000	10000	100000
W. circumcincta	1000	10000	100000
W. circumcincta	1000	10000	100000
W. circumcincta	1000	10000	100000
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W. circumcincta	1000	10000	100000

Every healthy ewe you do not deworm is a contribution to next season's drug efficacy.

FAMACHA is a Precision Tool for Haemonchus Contortus



The Five-Point Check Catches the Parasites FAMACHA Misses

Node 1: Eye.

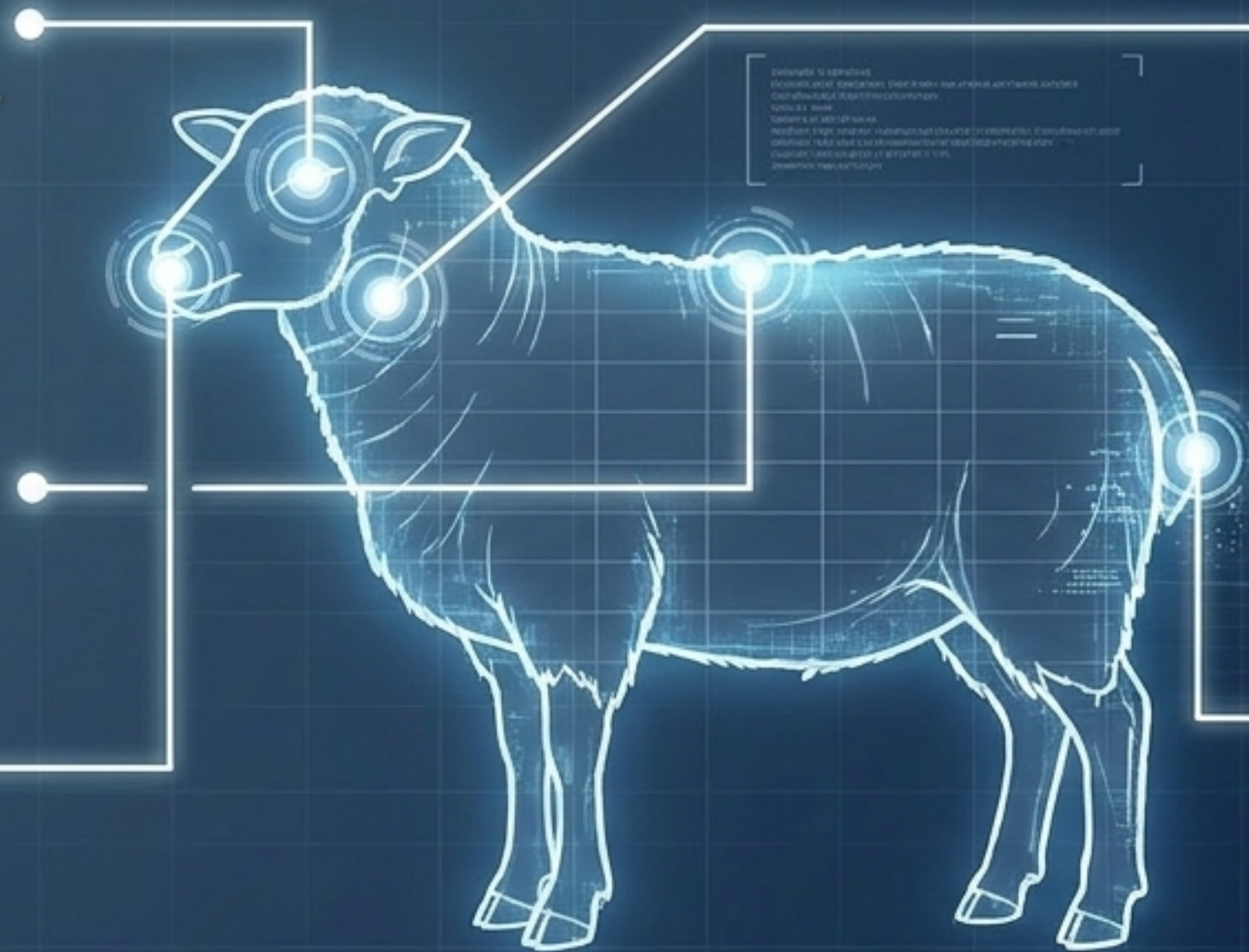
Tests for: Anemia via FAMACHA.
Indicator of: Barber Pole Worm (*Haemonchus contortus*).

Node 3: Back / Spine.

Tests for: Body Condition Score (BCS < 2).
Indicator of: Chronic parasite load or nutritional deficit.

Node 5: Nose.

Tests for: Nasal discharge.
Indicator of: Nasal bot fly (*Oestrus ovis*).



Node 2: Jaw.

Tests for: Bottle Jaw.
Indicator of: Severe protein loss from extreme parasitism.

Node 4: Tail / Dag.

Tests for: Rear-end soiling/scours.
Indicator of: Trichostrongylus, Teladorsagia, or Coccidia (none of which cause anemia).

**A lamb with a pink eye (FAMACHA 2) but severe scours (Dag 4) is failing.
Treat the Five-Point Check failure even if the eyelid color looks safe.**

Coccidiosis Prevention: Labeled Drugs vs. Neurological Risks

Risk Context: Eimeria protozoa peak risk window is 4 to 8 weeks of age, especially in high-density jugs or overgrazed lots.



FDA-Labeled Path



Bovatec (Lasalocid): Feed additive, FDA-approved for confined sheep.



Deccox (Decoquinat): Labeled for young non-lactating sheep.

Status: The default first-choice. No VCPR required.



Extra-Label Warning



Amprolium (Corid): Widely discussed online, but illegal to use without a vet.



The Danger: Amprolium is a thiamine antagonist. Extended doses induce Polioencephalomalacia (PEM)—neurological disease, blindness, opisthotonos.

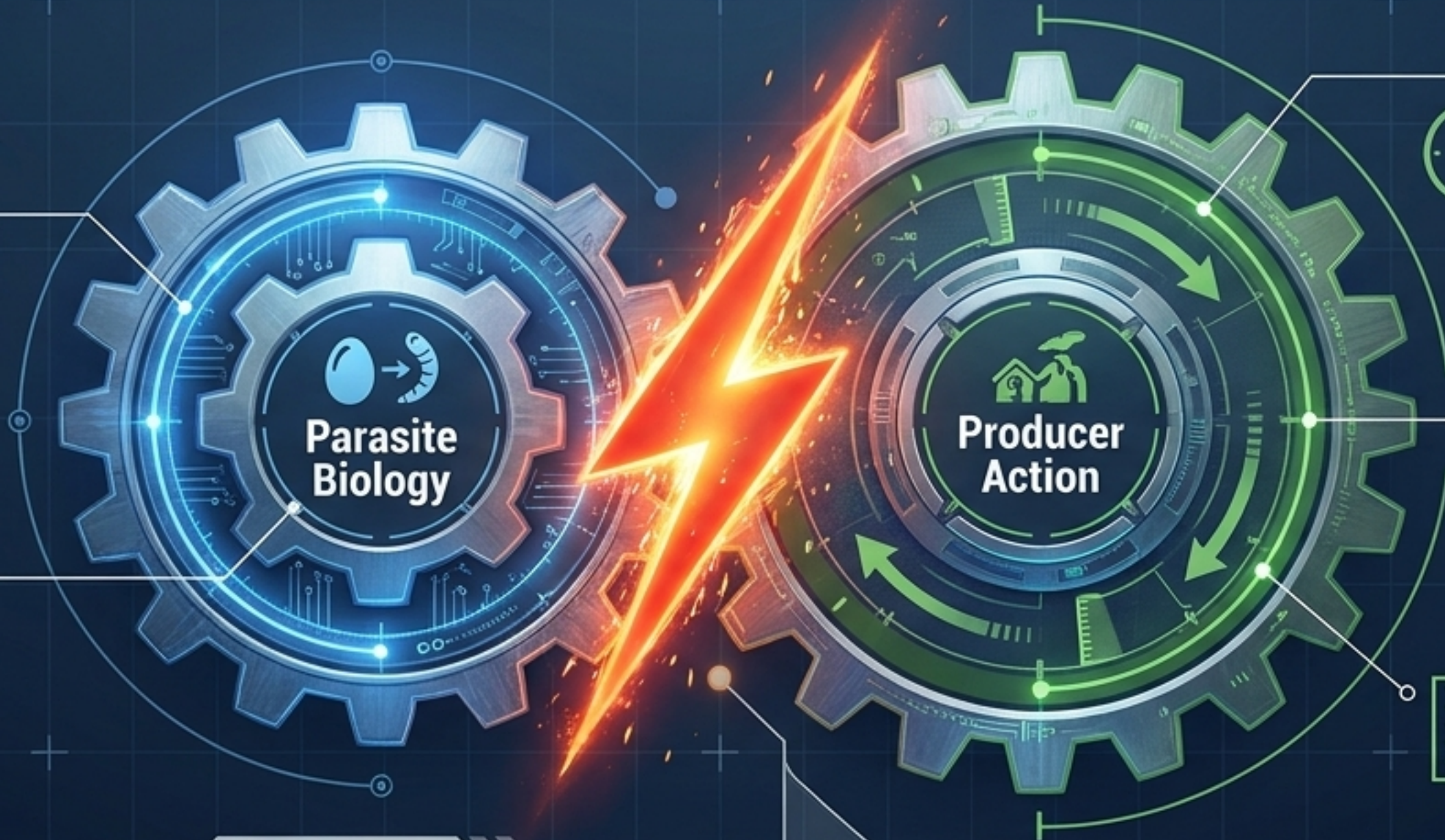
Rule: Never reach for Amprolium without vet-prescribed thiamine supplementation alongside it.



First-Summer Grazing Rotations Sever the Parasite Life Cycle

Eggs deposited on pasture hatch into L3 infective larvae in 4 to 5 days.

Larvae concentrate in the bottom 2 inches of the sward.



Graze 4 to 6 Days: Move the flock before the freshly deposited larvae can be re-ingested.



Rest 65+ Days: Exploit summer heat and UV to kill remaining L3 larvae on the rested pasture.



Height Minimum: Never graze below 3 to 4 inches.

TEAR-SHEET

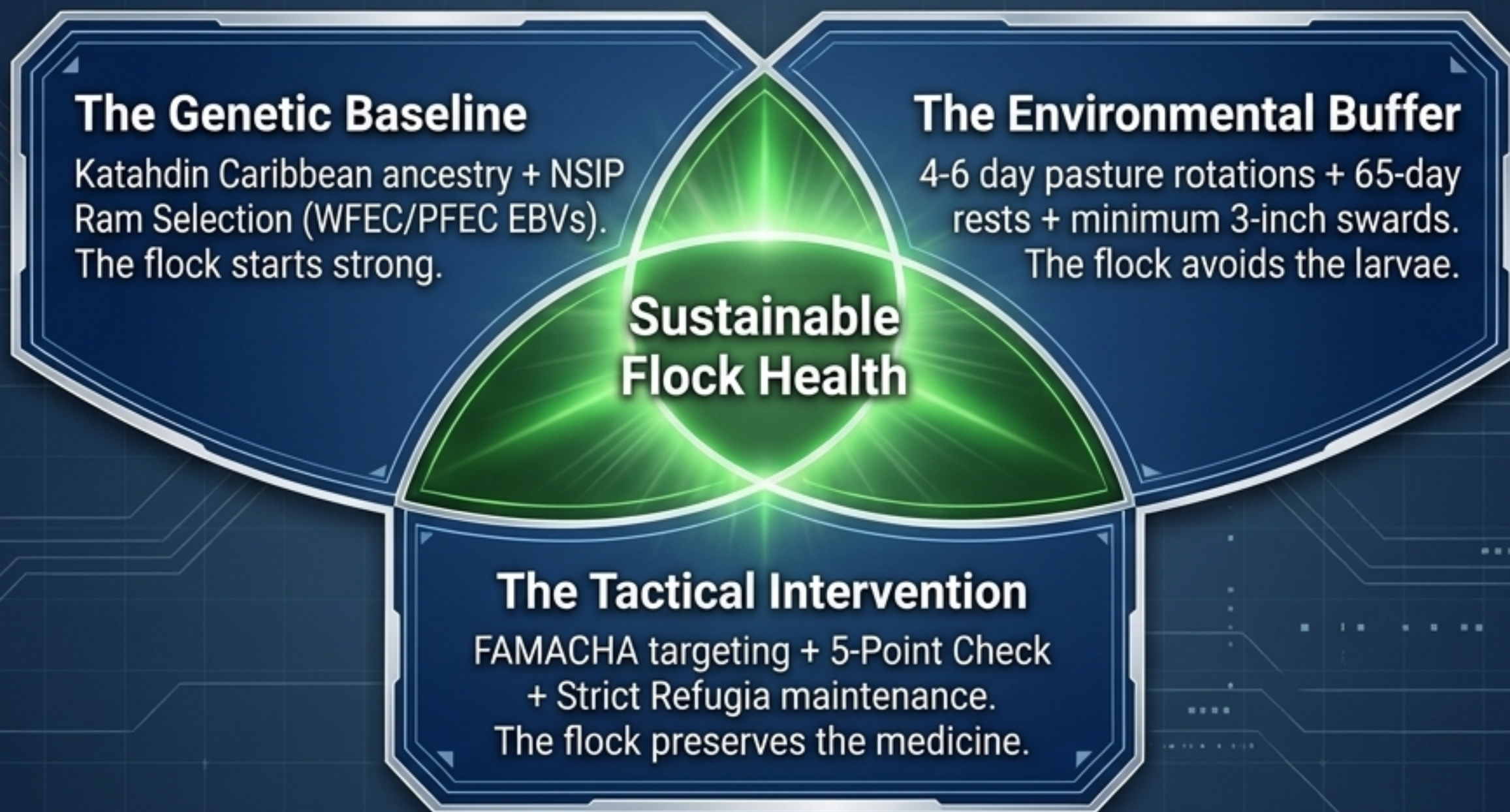


Multi-Species Advantage

Cattle and horses act as vacuum cleaners. They ingest sheep GI nematodes, dead-ending the parasite life cycle. Hay aftermath serves as functionally clean pasture.

Parasite Resistance is an Engine, Not a Single Drug

Integrated Flock Health Engine



No single chemical dewormer can overcome poor grazing, and no pasture rotation can outrun bad genetics. First-year Katahdin health requires all three systems operating in unison.