

ASK A PRO: REGIONAL FLY CONTROL

With more than 18,000 types of flies across the United States, there's no one-size-fits-all approach to fly control. Flies are uniquely suited to regional climates and conditions, so the fly control methods that work in muggy Missouri probably won't be as effective in moderate California; different regions require different tools and approaches to get the job done. We chatted with equine experts from opposite sides of the country about how they overcome their area's unique fly challenges: world champion performance horse trainer Brad Barkemeyer lives in Scottsdale, Arizona, and international grand prix dressage riders David Marcus and Nicholas Fyffe from Wellington, Florida.

Q When is fly season where you live?

BB: It starts in April—maybe a little earlier if we've had rain—and goes through October.

Is your fly control plan tailored to your area? One approach does not fit all. Top pros from around the United States share their strategies to keep flies at bay.

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ULTRA SHIELD



DM: With the temperatures being so moderate here year-round, fly season is essentially all year long with more flies during high humidity months.

NF: We also notice that the flies get worse at the end of the equestrian season. When horses start leaving town, flies go to the barns still housing horses. The fly to horse ratio becomes a lot more concentrated.

Q What are the unique climate-related challenges you face?

BB: The first challenge is the length of our season, and every year it seems like the flies are coming out earlier and staying longer. During the dry period through July, we have the typical stable flies, but once it starts getting humid, the gnats come out—those little black gnats that are

just a huge pain because they get in your nose and ears and in your horse's nose and ears. At least we don't have very many mosquitoes!

DM: We don't have a winter freeze here, so we don't have a season that kills off the bacteria in the air and soil. A tiny fly bite with that bacteria can turn into a summer sore [a non-healing skin lesion that often comes with intense itching and proud flesh], which can escalate very quickly.

NF: Summer sores and other fly issues can prevent horses from competing well, or even at all. So, it's very, very important for us to manage flies, because they can aggravate even small wounds and cuts and sideline a horse for a long time.

Q What fly control approach have you found works best for you?

BB: I use UltraShield® EX Insecticide & Repellent as a premise spray, where the flies

tend to congregate around feeders and waterers. I spray it down in those areas and on the stable walls, which has really helped.

When I travel, I like to use UltraShield® Red. It's a broad-spectrum spray that kills flies, ticks and mosquitoes, so it's great for when we're travelling through a variety of climates.

NF: Our go-to spray is UltraShield® Sport. Because it's so hot and humid here, our

horses can get pretty sweaty, so a sweat-resistant, rain-resistant fly spray is a must. It's what we use both at home and at shows. When we turn our horses out and they aren't getting washed frequently, we use UltraShield® Red. It's effective for a good week.

DM: We also use the UltraShield® Green at shows for our more sensitive horses. It's subtle but effective, and when we're showing, we want to be careful to not

aggravate the horse in any way that could affect their performance.

Q Do you have any other fly control tips?

NF: If a horse is nervous about getting sprayed, apply the spray to a clean cloth and directly apply it to where the flies like to settle.

BB: Use fly spray in your trailers! Before a trip, especially

at the height of fly season, I'll spray the walls and mangers of the trailer, so our horses are more comfortable and haul better.

Remember, fly spray alone cannot make up for poor animal husbandry practices—clean barns, appropriately managed manure and preventing standing water. But when you have good environmental management in place and use UltraShield®, it's a potent one-two punch.

