Prairie Dog Contraception

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ABSTRACT: Traditional methods of prairie dog management are not always practical or acceptable. Therefore, other methods need to be developed to aid managers responsible for prairie dog management. Contraception is one such method being developed at the National Wildlife Research Center (NWRC). GonaCon™, an immunocontraceptive vaccine, has shown promise for other species when administered as a single shot. A laboratory dose-response study and a field study using GonaCon™ with black-tailed prairie dogs are being conducted concurrently at NWRC. DiazaCon™ is an oral contraceptive that resulted in a 47% reduction in the number of pups/adult in a preliminary field trial. However, treatment was administered late in the breeding season in that trial. A new field study is currently underway to examine the effects of DiazaCon™ on reproduction when administered to black-tailed prairie dogs just prior to the breeding season.

KEY WORDS: black-tailed prairie dog, *Cynomys ludovicianus*, DiazaCon™, fertility control, GonaCon™, immunocontraception, prairie dog, rodent control

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