



The mild and dry weather is helping with conditions underfoot and making it far more pleasant to be outside with the sheep. However, there is always a downside and this warm weather still means flystrike can occur so be on your guard for those lambs with dirty bums or lame feet. The colder nights will slow down maggot activity and development, but the affected lamb will still suffer with health and growth restrictions.

### Parasite forecast

The 'black scour worm' otherwise known as the *Trichostrongyles* affect the small intestine and the stomach. Their clinical signs include:

- Dark, black foetid diarrhoea
- Poor growth rates
- Inappetence
- Dehydration
- Death



These worms most commonly affect late fattening lambs, store lambs, replacement ewe lambs and yearlings. These clinical signs will warrant a worming treatment; however significant growth losses will have occurred by the time these signs have been seen.

It is far better to be ahead of the game and treat by monitoring FECs and daily live weight gain data. This will reduce your costs in term of growth rate losses, reduce the amount of eggs being shed onto the pasture and improve overall health of the group.

### Treatment

When a worming treatment is required, think about where the lambs or yearlings are grazing and any available pasture.

- Can the lambs be moved to 'tack' grazing that has been sheep free over the summer and late autumn?
  - If yes – a short acting wormer can be used i.e. monepantel (ZOLVIX) or an Ivermectin (i.e. Noromectin, Oramec etc).
  - This is another good opportunity to use Zolvix as a clear out drench to remove all worms including resistant worms.

- Will the lambs/yearlings remain on 'dirty' grazing that has had sheep on it over the summer/autumn?
  - If yes, then a persistent wormer will be required, i.e. moxidectin (Cydecitn, Zermex) or if there are suspected resistance issues then Zolvix can be used, but it may need to be used again in 3-4 weeks if conditions remain relatively mild.

### Faecal Egg Count Reduction Test or Drench Test

This is an ideal time to **TEST YOUR WORMER!** I set the challenge in the New Year for everyone to check at least one wormer on their farm this year to determine whether it is still working. Hands up who has done it??? Thought so!..

Now could be a good time to do it if you still have high worm burdens on farm. Follow the steps below:

1. Take a muck sample from the suspect group to the practice.
2. If the egg count is around 300-350 epg or above AND you have clinical signs or poor growth rates as described, then you may need to treat for worms.
3. Treat with either moxidectin, ivermectin or Zolvix as described.
4. Re sample 14 days later.

We can then have a look at how well the wormers are working on your farm. If you wormed without getting the initial muck sample, you can still bring in a muck sample 14 days later and there should be no worms present IF your wormer is working.

- If you are using a yellow levamisole wormer, you need to bring in muck sample 7 days after treatment.
- And no one should have used a white benzimidazole wormer now!!!

### Fluke forecast

The risk for fluke in our region is now moderate to high. As described in the previous newsletter some farms with a history of fluke will be at a higher risk and require treatments earlier. The lower risk farms (i.e. no known history of fluke) will require a treatment later this month. The dry weather has helped limit infective fluke stage movement on the pastures.

Treatment with **TRICLABENDAZOLE** i.e. fasinex, tribex etc is still the treatment to use at this time of year.

IF you need to treat for worms at the same time, i.e. likely in store lambs, replacements and yearlings, then a COMBINATION wormer i.e. Fasinex Duo or Triclamox would be ok to use.

### Sudden Death in store lambs

The following are the most common causes of sudden death in lambs at this time of year:

- Pasteurellosis
- Clostridia infections
- Acute fluke
- Parasitic Gastroenteritis

RECORD the numbers of deaths and if you have more than 2% of the group then get a post mortem done. We can do this at the practice or arrange for it to be done for you. Accepting losses each year and not identifying the actual cause will cost you money.