



Fluke forecast

FLUKE RISK = HIGH for our region this Autumn.

The hot/warm temperatures of July and the subsequent wetter weather means that the development and movement of infective fluke on the pasture is increasing and therefore the risk to our South Western region has been classified as high for this Autumn.

This forecast will be increased in accuracy when the August meteorological data is in but the current suggestions are that PROPHYLATIC treatment to prevent ACUTE fluke infections will be very likely to be needed later in September.

This is relevant to groups of sheep grazing on fluke risk pasture. i.e. boggy, wet, known fluke history pasture.

The plan for controlling fluke is extremely farm specific and those with a flock health plan will be able to develop this in detail with us at the practice.

It is not possible to rely solely upon a fluke drench to control and prevent fluke due to potential resistance issue regarding Triclabendazole and its effectiveness when damage/infection has already occurred.

Fluke control –points to consider:

- Ensure that ALL sheep are fully vaccinated with either Ovivac P or Heptavac P – FLUKE infection predisposes the sheep to clostridial disease 'BLACK'S disease'.
- AVOID grazing poorly drained pasture.
- If you have had fluke on your farm in the past or if you are grazing suspect pasture then you will need to treat all stock later this month.
- If you are unsure if your farm has fluke infection present – then we can blood test 12 ewes as a representative group to look for exposure to fluke. Speak to us at the practice to discuss this.

Clinical signs of acute fluke:

- Sudden death – post mortem essential to determine is due to acute fluke.
- Anaemia



- Dullness and/or difficulty breathing.
- Abdominal pain.

Treatment options:

- **Triclabendazole** (Fasinex, Tribex) – this will kill immature fluke from 2 days of age up to adult fluke. N.b. 56 day meat withhold.

Depending upon the forecast or the risk of the pasture, treatment with Triclabendazole may need repeating in 4-6 weeks if you are unable to move them to drier pasture.

AVOID infecting your farm with fluke!!

If you haven't had a fluke problem in the past then PLEASE try to avoid bringing it in with new sheep. Due to the development of resistance in some part of the UK to Triclabendazole, the quarantine advice for fluke treatments has changed.

Quarantine for FLUKE – consider the following:

1. Have you had a previous fluke problem? If not then you need to make sure that **INCOMING NEW** stock don't bring fluke with them – therefore Triclabendazole required.
2. Do you have fluke already? If so then you need to make sure that INCOMING stock don't bring Triclabendazole resistant fluke with them.

The advice is **EITHER** to treat with two doses of closantel (flukiver) 6 weeks apart, keeping the sheep in quarantine on dry pasture for 4 weeks after the second dose.

OR delay treatment for fluke for 6 weeks but keep on well drained land in quarantine and then treat once with Closantel (flukiver).

Fluke treatment is by no means straight forward and is very farm specific. Advice from non veterinary advisors is often unhelpful and incorrect. Please speak to us at the practice if you are unsure.

Parasite forecast

This weather is ideal for larval movement on the pasture. We now see the emergence of the trichostrongyles or 'black scour worm'. A burden of these worms will have significant impacts on growth. Therefore treatment should be given based upon:

- Faecal Egg Counts
- Reduction in daily live weight gains (less than 150g/day if on grass alone).

For the best outcome and improvement of growth rates, lambs should be moved to clean pasture to reduce the constant challenge from infective larvae.

Treatment options: Autumn.

- **Monepantel (Zolvix) – orange drench** as an end of summer drench to clear out any resistant worms. This is a good time of year to incorporate Zolvix into your parasite control plan.
- Moxidectin (Cydectin/Zermex) – clear drench. A **persistent** wormer, can be used if lambs are unable to be moved to cleaner areas. **If you use this product throughout the summer then it would be advisable to use one of the other options as a break dose.**
- **Derquantel and Abemectin (Startect) – purple drench**, used in the same way as Zolvix.

Heamonchosis

This worm is a problem at this time of year. It causes ANEMIA and weight loss, but not scour. If you have any lean sheep that are very pale/white in the skin under the eyelid, or have a swelling under the jaw 'bottle jaw', then *Heamonchus* may be an issue.



The above listed wormers or closantel (Flukiver) will treat *Heamonchus*. Speak to us for advice if you are experiencing this.