

Dear Farmer,

Hopefully by the time you read this it will have stopped raining and dried up again, having looked like it might be a dry summer with little grass growth the heavens have opened.

I wanted to draw people's attention to calving gates, a few farms have installed these and they are very useful for restraining cows for calvings and caesareans, whilst most farms have very good facilities, if you are thinking of upgrading yours it would definitely be worth thinking of one. Teemore Engineering were the first company I found on google who make a good looking gate! Teemore Engineering's local rep is Paul, you can contact him for further information and pricing on 07827694393. We don't have any commercial relationship with them.

This issue we are looking at wormer resistance, how it develops and strategies you can employ to reduce it. Wormer resistance is very important as it is responsible for poor growth in lambs and if you're drenching with ineffective wormers you are effectively pouring money down the drain!

If you want to get started with worm egg count monitoring don't forget we can test these samples in house at our Bovey Tracey branch.

Hopefully we will see some of you in the sunshine at the Chagford Show, where we will have our usual stand.

Ashley

WHAT IS ANTHELMINTIC RESISTANCE?

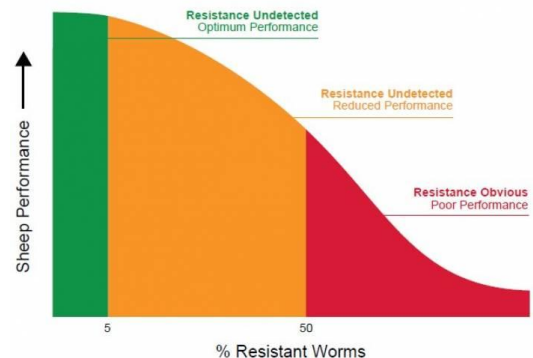
Resistance is the heritable (genetic) ability of the worm to survive a dose of anthelmintic which would normally be effective. It could also be described as 'drug tolerance' in worms. A worm is said to be resistant if it survives exposure to the standard recommended dose of the anthelmintic and can then pass this ability on to its offspring.

In a population of worms on a farm, anthelmintic resistance is said to exist on that farm when more than 5% of the worms are 'drug tolerant'. However, unless we test for resistance we would probably not notice any lack of effectiveness of treatment until their numbers had increased to 50% or more of the total worm population. At this stage the anthelmintic is killing so few worms that sheep are clearly not being effectively de-wormed and production losses are significant.

Factors which affect the speed of resistance

Five key factors which define the rate at which anthelmintic resistance develops. These factors are what the SCOPS principles are based on:

- Proportion of resistant worms on a farm. As this gets higher the faster you head towards the red zone in the graph. The sooner we act the more impact we can have.
- Frequency of anthelmintic use. Every time we use an anthelmintic, we select for resistance because we kill susceptible worms and allow resistant ones to survive and breed.
- Efficacy of each treatment. Under-dosing or using an anthelmintic to which there is resistance present will give resistant worms even more chance to survive and breed.
- Proportion of the total worm population in the animal at the time of treatment. This is very important because if a large proportion of the worms are in the sheep compared to on the pasture (e.g. lambs weaned on to a hay or silage aftermath) then the selection for resistance is high. If the proportion in the sheep is low then the effect is much less.
- Dilution of any worms that survive treatment with unselected worms. The best way to reduce the number of resistant worms that the survivors produce is to make sure they breed with susceptible worms, as this will dilute their resistant genes.



The graph shows this in terms of sheep performance versus the proportion of resistant worms on the farm. The percentage of resistant worms increases over time and production losses increase as more worms survive treatment. In lambs this means reduced growth rates, but because the increase in resistant worms is slow and progressive, we either don't notice that performance is going downhill or blame other factors, such as trace element deficiencies.

How does anthelmintic resistance develop?

Every time we use an anthelmintic, worms that are susceptible to its chemical activity are killed and, if present, any that are resistant survive. Over time the continued use of that chemical will result in an increasing proportion of resistant worms and eventually this will be high enough so that wormy sheep do not respond to treatment. This process can be slowed or speeded up by certain management practices.

Is it too late?

For the majority of farms it is not too late to take action to slow the progress of anthelmintic resistance. Although we can find worms that are resistant to the 1-BZ (white) and levamisole (2-LV yellow) wormers on the majority of farms, it may not have reached a level that causes an obvious problem on all of them. For the macrocyclic-lactone (clear 3-ML) wormers there has been a marked increase in recent years, probably linked to their widespread use as endectocides for the treatment of sheep scab. Action to try to preserve this group is now imperative.

In the next Newsletter we will discuss the steps involved in reducing anthelmintic resistance on your farm

From www.scops.org.uk

BVD "STAMP IT OUT" INITIATIVE CLUSTER MEETING

Friday 19th July at 11am

Join us at

Bovey Tracey Golf Centre

Pasties, cakes, teas and coffees provided

Funding is currently available across England to tackle BVD. The funding will enable farmers to apply for one-to-one farm advisory visits with us. Vets will work with keepers of breeding cattle to tackle BVD on their farms. Funding is available through the Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE). To be eligible for this funding enrolment and attendances to a cluster meeting is essential. This may be the last meeting we will be holding for farmers to attend to join this initiative. So please come along if you are considering taking advantage of the funding that is available.

This meeting is open to all keepers of breeding cattle interested in finding out more about this initiative and the funding available.

At this meeting our vets will discuss the importance of this initiative, the disease itself, its costs both nationally and at farm level, and what sort of control strategies farmers can implement. The meeting will also outline what we can deliver for the farmer, the funding available and how to get involved.

At the end of the meeting cattle keepers will be given the opportunity to enrol on this initiative.

Please note this is the second meeting of its type that we have held, so those who came along to the first, back in November do not need to come along again to this meeting.

BOOKING IS ESSENTIAL

RSVP to Lottie by email: moorgatevets@btconnect.com or telephone 01626 833023



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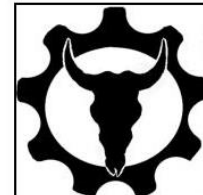
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