



Sheep Newsletter

Wormer Resistance Special – Part 1

As I sit here writing this newsletter from the 'comfort' of a very muggy office, the temperature continues to rise outside to a slightly stifling 30 degrees. Of course it makes a nice change from pounding rain of recent weeks but I wonder what new and interesting problems we are going to face if the weather continues to be so unpredictable... worms, of course, immediately spring to mind...

Firstly I would like to thank all those of you who attended the recent meeting on sheep worming and resistance management. I really appreciate your support at these events and hope that you find them enjoyable as well as informative. For those of you that were unable to make it, I will now offer you a snapshot of what you missed...

The evening started with a quiz on worms and resistance management. I was extremely impressed with the level of knowledge within the room and it was a closely fought contest with the victorious team winning by only a single point! The quiz provided the perfect opportunity for shepherds to get to know each other better as well as to share knowledge and experiences.

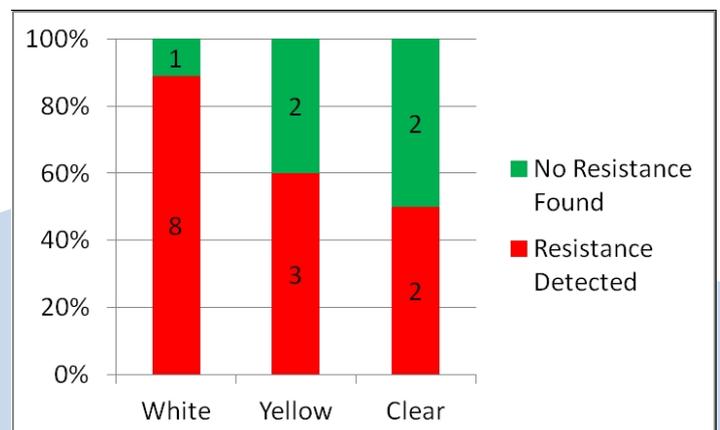
The quiz was followed by a talk outlining the SCOPS principles (for more information go to www.scops.org.uk) with particular focus on the importance of the 'in refugia' worm population.

I also outlined the results of some recent resistance testing carried out farms in our area and I have summarised these here:-

- Out of nine farms tested for benzimidazole (white drench) resistance in the Trichostrongyle egg type worms, eight farms showed evidence of resistance = **89% of farms tested had white drench resistance.**

- Out of five tested for levamisole (yellow drench) resistance, three showed evidence of resistance = **60% of farms tested had yellow drench resistance.**
- Out of four farms tested for ivermectin (clear drench) resistance, two showed evidence of resistance = **50% of farms tested had clear drench resistance.**

These results are demonstrated by the bar chart below:



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Of those farms tested:-

- Only one farm has tested all three drug classes and has been found to have 'triple resistance'.
- A second farm has tested white and yellow and found to have resistance to both classes – we have yet to test the clear drenches on this farm.
- On one farm only the clear drenches have been tested and resistance has been found - it is likely that were we to test the other two classes there is likely to be resistance to both of these also.

I think that this should be a reminder to those of you who have not yet tested for wormer resistance that there is a high chance that you have resistance to at least one of the drench classes on your farm. In terms of wormer resistance, knowledge is everything as it is only when you know which drugs you have resistance to that you are able to make informed management choices as to which wormer products are going to be effective in your flock. Remember that wormer resistance is a natural phenomenon and resistant worms will exist in a population of worms whatever you do. The important take home message however is that **it is essential that you do all that you can to slow the rate of development of wormer resistance on your farm by following the SCOPS principles**. One of these principles is to **test for resistance** to ensure that you use only the products that are going to be highly effective against the worm burden in your sheep. This will not only ensure that the rate of resistance development is decreased but also that your **productivity is maximised**. If you have never tested for resistance before and would like to test you need to take a pooled faecal sample from the treated group of lambs at a set time after treatment:-

- Fourteen days for WHITE (benzimidazoles) or CLEAR (short acting ivermectins) drenches
- Seven days for YELLOW (levamisole) drenches

The protocol for taking that faecal sample is given below:-

- Gather the whole group of animals into a confined area of pasture where there is minimal faecal contamination/ area of hard standing.
- Collect **ten freshly passed faecal samples from ten individuals and bag each sample separately**.
- The individuals sampled should all be at the same stage of production and apparently healthy.
- Samples should be taken to the lab to be analysed **within 24 hours of collection (maximum 48 hours)**. Keep samples cool, but do not put in fridge.
- The samples should be marked for a **pooled** worm egg count – the lab will pool the samples to ensure a reliable average sample is analysed.

For those of you who have never carried out a post drench resistance test and would like to do one, we are able to offer, **thanks to sponsorship from Pfizer Animal Health, one post drench worm egg count at HALF PRICE to test for the presence of resistance in your flock**. Please call Louise on 07827 818754 for more details (availability limited).

We finished the meeting with a talk from Matt Williams from Pfizer Animal Health on the new worming product **STARTECT** followed by a delicious steak pie dinner.

If you would like to know more about STARTECT then please call Louise to discuss whether or not it would be suitable for use in your flock. Below are a few basic facts about the product:-

- Dual active wormer containing derquantel (new active – purple drench class) and abamectin (ML / clear drench class).
- Effective against gastrointestinal roundworms and lungworm (not fluke).
- Meat withdrawal period: fourteen days.
- Can be used in pregnant, lactating and breeding animals.
- Mild transient coughing is very commonly reported following drenching.
- Safety not established in sheep <six weeks old or <10Kg.
- DOSE - 1ml per 5kg.
- Oral drench.
- Do not refrigerate or freeze.
- Shelf-life as packaged – two years.
- Shelf-life when opened – twelve months.
- Pack sizes available - 1 litre and 5 litre.
- Only available from your vet.

 **STARTECT**[®]
Dual active worm control



Remember to please order your **Toxovax** and **Enzovax** abortion vaccines as soon as possible to ensure you have them in time for tugging.

Ensuring good ram fertility is an essential component in achieving good lambing percentages in your flock. Please contact Louise if you would like to discuss testing your rams to ensure they are in tip-top condition for tugging.

Do you need new teasers for this season? If so, please call Louise to book in your ram vasectomies well in advance of the breeding season.