June 2017

Severn Edge
FARM VETS

Flock Health - Parasite Control

Nematodirus Forecast from Nadis

Important:
There will be variation from farm to farm and even field to field. Sheep farmers are urged to assess their risk based on the history of the field (grazed by young lambs last year is a high risk, for example). South facing fields will tend to have an earlier hatch.

Altitude is also important. As a guide, every 100m increase in altitude will delay hatching by about 7 days (for example if the nearest station is at 200m above sea level (a.s.l.) and the farm is at 300m a.s.l, hatching will be delayed by around 7 days beyond our forecast).

Risk factors to consider:-
Are your lambs grazing pasture that carried lambs last spring?* If 'yes' and one or more of the factors below apply, then your lambs are at risk of Nematodirus infection and you should monitor the forecasts regularly*

Are the lambs old enough to be eating significant amounts of grass? (generally 6 –12 weeks of age but may be younger if ewes are not milking well).

Do you have groups where there is also likely to be a challenge from coccidiosis? For example mixed aged lambs are a higher risk.

Have you got lambs that are under other stresses e.g. triplets, fostered, on young or older ewes?

Blowfly Strike

- Fly strike caused by the larval stages (maggots) of the blowfly Lucilia sericata (greenbottles) affects around 80 % of UK sheep flocks each year.
- The severity of fly strike is highly variable depending on several factors including the weather.
- Failure to treat promptly is a welfare issue and can lead to reduced performance, secondary infections and death.
- Even very small fly strike lesions cause disrupted grazing and rapid weight loss.
- Female flies are attracted by the odour of decomposing matter such as wounds, soiled fleece or dead animals.
- Footrot lesions, dermatophilosis (lumpy wool), and urine scalding around the prepuce also attract egg-laying adult flies.
- Preventing diarrhoea caused by parasitic worms will greatly reduce the risk of blowfly strike on the breech.
- The blowfly season usually extends from May to September but with changing climate the season can be from March through to December in some regions.
- Parasite control plans should include blowfly protection during the fly-risk period and fit with the need to control other parasites.
- Topical preparations containing the insect growth regulators (IGRs) cyromazine and dicyclanil, which prevent blowfly strike, should be applied before the identified risk period;
  - Cyromazine provides protection against blowfly strike for up to 10 weeks.
  - Products containing dicyclanil afford 8-19 weeks' protection against blowfly strike depending on product choice.
- Repeat treatments may be required, depending on the product used, and season length, necessitating careful planning when treating lambs due to the long meat withdrawal periods.
- Pour-on preparations containing cypermethrin provide protection against fly strike for up to 6 to 8 weeks; alpha-cypermethrin products provide protection for 8-10 weeks.
- These products can also be used for the treatment of active maggot infestations.
- Deltamethrin spot-on products are used for treatment of blowfly strike only and provide no protection.
- Diazinon dips treat active maggot infestations and provide good protection against blowfly strike for up to 6 weeks.

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RCVS ACCREDITED PRACTICE
FARM ANIMAL PRACTICE

Nadis - Parasite Forecast June 2017 – Summary

The start of April was warm followed by close to average temperatures, but ending with a late cold snap. Mean UK temperature was 8.0˚C, which is 0.6˚C above the long-term average. Rainfall was below normal except in NW Scotland and parts of SW England. (www.nadis.org.uk). Local farm conditions may change, consult your vet. Effective worm control should be part of your veterinary health plan.

Sheep - Parasitic gastroenteritis (PGE)

- Lambs on "safe grazing" at the start of the grazing season (fields previously arable or grazed by cattle the previous year) should not need worming until after they are weaned.
- Ideally, wean the lambs onto silage or hay aftermaths that have not been grazed by sheep earlier in the year.
- Lambs grazing permanent pastures will usually require worming to limit the build-up of infective larvae later in the season ('mid-summer rise').
- The timing and need for worming treatment(s) for lambs will depend on grazing history, levels of contamination by periparturient ewes, stocking density, and prevailing weather conditions.
- Performance monitoring, or worm faecal egg counts (FECs) of lambs based on pooled faecal samples for 10-12 lambs can be used to guide anthelmintic treatments.
- Treatment is generally recommended when FECs exceed 500-700 epg.
- Follow SCOPS recommendations by leaving some lambs untreated, which reduces the likelihood of selecting for resistance, and monitor treatment efficacy by performing a drench test post-treatment.
- Prolonged local dry weather conditions during summer can delay larval challenge to lambs grazing contaminated pastures with a return to infectivity when wet weather arrives.
- Remember to include rams in the farm's parasite control programme because they are fully susceptible to PGE.

Targeted Selective Treatment (TST)

- Some lambs in the flock in good body condition and performing well can be left unwormed. In general, only 40- 60 % of lambs require worming.
- Target anthelmintic treatments for those lambs that are failing to meet expected growth rates by weighing lambs every 3-4 weeks.
- Regular weighing also identifies poor growth which may be caused by overstocking, trace element deficiencies etc. and prompt management review.

Cattle PGE

- Strategic worm control in cattle is usually applied to autumn/winter-born weaned calves in their first grazing season, and in spring-born beef suckler calves in their second grazing season.
- Calves receiving strategic anthelmintic treatments in the early part of the grazing season should remain on the same pasture during the entire grazing season, or moved to safe pastures (aftermaths) when these become available.
- Strategic regimes based on products with prolonged persistence against the stomach worm, Ostertagia ostertagi, may allow the build-up of other worm species later in the year (e.g. Cooperia) against which they have less efficacy, or little persistent effect.
- Worm infections can reduce growth rate by around 30 % in beef calves and replacement dairy heifers and can cause a drop in milk yield of 1kg per day in dairy cows.
- Severe infections, which peak during August/September, cause ill-thrift, loss of body condition and diarrhoea.

Lungworm

- Lungworm disease appears from June onwards in unvaccinated calves, those cattle without an effective anthelmintic programme, and naïve adult cattle.
- Early signs include coughing, initially after exercise then at rest, increased respiratory rate and difficulty in breathing.
- Affected cattle rapidly lose weight and body condition and should be removed from infected pasture and treated as quickly as possible.
- Supportive therapy may be required depending on clinical presentation.

There is very effective lungworm vaccine available, please us ask for details.

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