



**nantwich
farm vets**



MAY 2015 EWESLETTER

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For those of you who vaccinate against clostridial diseases make sure your breeding ewes have had their primary course of 2 injections before they need their booster in the pre-lambing period!



Hello all,

I recently attended the Sheep Veterinary Society congress in Stratford-upon-Avon. It's always a friendly event with lots of vets from all over the UK including the Isle of Mull (!) sharing their experiences and knowledge. I thought I would mention a few topics (amongst other things) which were discussed over the next few ewesletters.

I hope you've all had a good lambing this year and for those of you with a few sheep left to go it will soon be time to put your feet up.... Or get on with shearing along with everything else...!

Amy

MAGGOTS HAVE BEEN SIGHTED!

I have seen my first maggots of the year in a case of footrot which prompts early warning of blowfly strike in sheep. Blowfly strike is a welfare and cost issue.

The fly responsible is primarily the female common greenbottle "Lucilia sericata" who lays her eggs in the wool. The larvae which hatch migrate down the fibres of the wool to the skin where they cause extensive damage. Mature larvae then drop off the sheep onto the ground where they pupate. The whole lifecycle is rapid which is why disease can appear so quickly and why regular inspection of animals is important.

The risk of blowfly strike is higher in the following situations:

- Warmer weather
- High humidity
- Scouring sheep with faecal soiling around the back end
- In lowland flocks
- Where there are high numbers of blowfly
- In footrot
- In wounds
- In thicker fleeced breeds

The following measures may be taken to reduce the risk of blowfly strike:

- Good worm control to avoid scouring/poor condition sheep
- Tail docking
- Dagging and crutching
- Good footrot control
- Shearing
- Frequent checking of flocks
- Use of fly prevention treatments

There are many insecticides currently on the market. Some of these may be in the form of pour-on/spot-on/showers/dips. Be aware of how long they last (persistent activity), whether they are preventative &/or treatment and their meat withdrawal times when choosing an appropriate product (see table overleaf).



Sheep Services at Nantwich Farm Vets:

- Flock health advice
- Tup vasectomies
- Emergencies out of hours
- Routine screening eg. MV blood testing
- Basic post-mortems
- Skin scrapings
- Faecal egg counts
- Monitoring lamb growth rates
- Condition scoring
- Pre-breeding examination of tups

If there are any specific courses you would find useful please let me know. If there is enough demand I would be happy to run some.

Product	Administration	Treatment/prevention	Duration of protection
<i>Crovect</i>	Pour-on	Treatment and prevention of blowfly strike, ticks, headflies and biting lice	6-8 weeks (10 weeks vs ticks)
<i>Clik</i>	Pour-on	Prevention of blowfly strike	16 weeks
<i>Spot-on</i>	Spot-on	Treatment of ticks, lice, keds and blowfly strike	

Also consider ease of use and appropriateness for your flock and whether other parasites are to be targeted with the same product. If you would like further guidance on this please get in contact.

For treating individual cases of blowfly strike, cut away the wool around the lesion and remove all the maggots manually. Do not apply insecticide solutions (discussed above) directly to the raw skin but apply normally as a spot on or around the lesion. Some people choose to apply antiseptic creams to the lesions. Some lesions may be severe enough to warrant antibiotic +/- pain relief injections.

Managing worms in growing lambs

I am often asked “what is the best wormer to give my lambs tomorrow”.

Worm control is vitally important to avoid reductions in growth rates as well as incidence of scour and ill health.

The resistance to wormers we are now seeing in sheep flocks around the world is arguably one of the most significant sheep issues of the current time. There are few “hard and fast rules” when it comes to worm control and decisions should be very much made on an individual farm basis, taking into account available grazing, use of pasture rotation, rotation with other stock/crops, time of lambing and finishing. It is important to note that these plans are not fixed and should be reviewed regularly. I am more than happy to discuss worming plans for your farms but for now I can share some principles that can be applied to all farms.

1. Quarantine	Prevent incoming stock bringing in new worms which may already be resistant to certain wormers by using specific treatments before the new stock graze your land or mix with other stock. <i>Assume</i> incoming sheep are carrying resistant worms!
2. Test for anthelmintic resistance	You need to know what you’re dealing with in terms of which worms are about and which wormers they are susceptible to before you can devise a plan to combat any issues
3. Use wormers properly	Administer the correct dose in the correct manner. Dose all the flock for the heaviest animal to avoid underdosing and resistance development
4. Worm sheep only when necessary	With the use of faecal egg counting. NB. there are exceptions eg. <i>Nematodirus battus</i>
5. Select the appropriate wormer	Use treatments with the narrowest spectrum of action e.g less use of combination drenches where appropriate. Rotate use of different classes of wormer appropriately.
6. Adopt strategies to preserve susceptible worm populations on your farm	Consider part-flock treatments eg. Lambs with lowest weight gain and/or targeted selective treatments
7. Reduce dependence on wormers	There are other additional methods of worm control including grazing management, risk assessment, using rams which have been selected for resilience to worms

Reference: SCOPS technical manual