HAVE YOU GOT A PLAN FOR PARASITE CONTROL ?

- FEBRUARY 2024

It's been an interesting winter so far, with turnout hopefully just round the corner. Now's the time to think about how you're going to control parasites this grazing season.

Why is it important to have a plan?

Drops in growth rates (and yields in adult cattle)

- Up to 30% reduction in daily live weight gain, even with a low level worm challenge and in dairy cattle can cause up to 1kg/day drop in daily milk yield

Wormer resistance

- Reported 'clear wormer' (e.g. Ivermectin) resistance in cattle - this is the type of wormer found in pour on products

Developing immunity

- The rule of thumb is that it takes approximately 8 months of grazing to develop immunity to gutworms – having good immunity as heifers is key to setting them up for success as an adult milker or suckler cow

Environmental impact

- 'Clear wormers' have been particularly shown to impact soil invertebrates, including dung beetles which can help with gutworm control, by breaking down and drying out faecal pats and they can also be a carrier for predatory mites which eat fly larvae. Not to mention the impact they can have on soil health, water infiltration & the wider ecosystem
- White wormers can also be harmful to aquatic life.

MEETINGS COMING UP...

LAMBING COURSE:

10AM - 2PM
@ THE PRACTICE,
6TH FEBRUARY. £80 + VAT

LANTRA ACCREDITED INTERMEDIATE FOOT TRIMMING:

9AM - 5PM
@ OLD SODBURY AND PEWSEY,
7TH - 9TH FEBRUARY. £800 + VAT

LANTRA ACCREDITED FIRST AID FOR FEET:

9AM - 5PM @ OLD SODBURY,
22ND FEBRUARY. £300 + VAT

BEEF AND SHEEP MEDICINE HANDLING COURSE:

11AM - 12PM
@ THE PRACTICE, 22ND FEBRUARY.
£75 + VAT

APHA ACCREDITED AI COURSE:

10AM - 4PM @ MALMESBURY,
28TH FEBRUARY - 1ST MARCH.
£515 + VAT

If you are interested in any of the above please contact the office on 01666 823035

How to check the worm burden?

Regular weighing to monitor growth rates

- This is the most sensitive & earliest way of detecting worm burdens

Worm egg counts

- This needs to be done regularly and ideally collect up to 10-15 x individual fresh samples (should feel warm when you pick it up!), squeeze all the air out of the container and get it to us ASAP, it should be within 48 hours (chill in the fridge in the meantime).
- This method is less accurate, due to intermittent egg shedding and unequal distribution of worms within a group, which is why the more individual samples we can take the more accurate it'll be

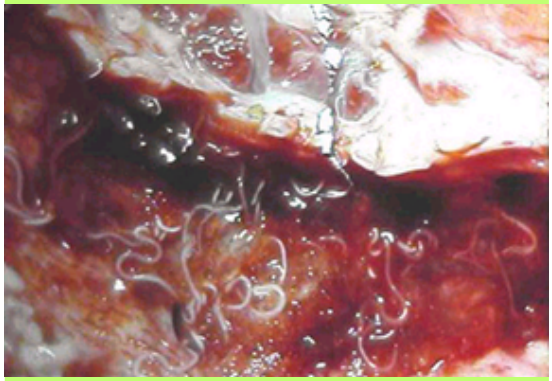
Clinical signs

- Loose faeces, mucky backends, reduced body condition (or variation in a group), scruffy/dull coats

Plasma pepsinogen (blood testing)

- This can be a useful at the end of the grazing season to check gutworm exposure as it correlates with gut damage. However this comes at a cost and the blood samples have to be sent off to a lab.

Although Lungworm is typically a late summer/autumn problem, there is a useful vaccine available to help control it which needs to be given pre-turnout.



APHA surveillance sees cases of lungworm all year round and it can be very unpredictable – so **don't get caught out, if you see any coughing in grazing animals beware of lungworm.**

Control of Gutworms

Grazing management

Mixed or sequential grazing with sheep or other species

- Need to beware of the risk of Fluke & Johne's disease, but usually gutworms are specific to cattle or sheep

Using lower risk pasture for youngstock

- High risk pasture would include anything grazed by youngstock the previous or current year
- Using 'clean pasture' (e.g. silage/hay aftermath) is particularly useful in the 2nd half of the grazing season, as pasture burdens usually peak from June/July onwards

Leader-follower system

- Allows young stock to graze on pastures with a low burden, then adult cattle with good immunity can come in after to 'mop up' any worms on pasture

Traffic light system

- If you're using worm egg counts or weighing, you can identify high (red), medium (amber) & low (green) risk pastures. Meaning you can prevent youngstock returning to high burden pastures

Wormer selection & administration

Wormer administration

- One of the simplest way to reduce the risk of resistance developing is making sure that we are **dosing correctly - using accurate weights and ensure dosing guns are clean and calibrated** (there are various good videos online on how to do this)

- Clean pasture is useful if we identify a high pasture burden, but if we 'dose and move' we risk selecting for resistance – to get around this we need to maintain a population of untreated worms (aka 'in refugia'), **either by: targeted selective treatment (see below, so not all animals are wormed), worming and keeping them on 'dirty' pasture for a period of time then move to 'clean' pasture, or move to 'clean' pasture and worm a few days after** (timing depends on what product is used)

Wormer selection

- There are options for long acting wormer cover – including Panacur bolus or long acting Cydectin injection. These can be appropriate in animals that are to be set stocked on high risk pasture without the ability to monitor for worm burdens. However, as an industry we're trying to move away from blanket long-acting wormer cover; moreover it doesn't help with development of immunity as animals lack exposure during wormer cover

Quarantine

- Incoming/returning stock which have a history of grazing should be tested and/or treated to minimize the risk of bringing in resistant worms

Wormer treatment check

- These can be useful after giving a wormer to check if it has worked or if there is any evidence of resistance. It involves collecting a set of faecal samples before worming and after worming – the timing of this depends on what product you've used.

Targeted selective treatment

- As mentioned above we can use various tools to decide if a group need to be wormed, but we can go a step further by only worming the individual animals which need it. The best way to do this is using growth rate information from regular weighing – anything not hitting 0.7-0.8kg/day requiring worming. This is a more laborious approach but it greatly reduces the selection pressure for resistance, resulting in better longer term efficacy of wormers and also allows for cattle to learn that going through a crush doesn't always mean they're being injected!

https://agrieid.co.uk/products/load-bars

Parasite control really varies farm to farm. If you'd like to discuss it further, specific to your own farm please give us a ring 01666 823035.

Vet Tech update

Don't forget about *fly control* – getting on top of it earlier rather than later, before fly populations explode.

We offer a 'Friendly Flies' service with our Vet Techs – this is a biological fly control method, by releasing tiny native wasps which kill the fly larvae. We've had some really positive feedback on clients which have already been using this. Get in touch for more info.

Congratulations to the Collingborn family in getting their young British Friesian bull **Brinkworth Buster** into AI stud. For more details about Buster visit www.uksires.co.uk.

For details of bulls for sale call 01666 510261

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