



External Parasites.

June 2019



External parasites are a year-round issue for all ages of stock. Effective prevention and control involve three areas of management:

1. **Biosecurity** – The easiest route into a flock is hitching a ride on newly purchased animals. Treat for Scab and internal parasites on arrival, then keep separate from the main flock for at least 21 days. Buying in from known, trusted sources is ideal.
2. **Inspection/examination** – Regular, routine flock inspection will allow for early detection and containment of any parasitic outbreak. Look for signs of rubbing, scratching, loss of fleece or poor body condition.
3. **Handling** – During routine handling for management procedures, be alert to signs of poor fleece quality or areas of skin inflammation and damage.

What to watch out for...

Sheep Scab

Once notifiable, now covered by the Sheep Scab Order (1997), Sheep Scab is a debilitating mange caused by *Psoroptes* mites. Though mainly a winter problem, cases have been seen during the summer months. Restlessness and rubbing become apparent in the early stages, progressing to significant areas of inflammation and pus-filled lesions which rupture and discharge. The mites tend to colonise withers, flank and brisket but can progress to face, head and ventrum. Sheep Scab may be fatal if left untreated.

Treat with Macrocytic Lactones (MLs) such as Ivermectin.

Lice

Lice infestation occurs widely. Again, more so in winter, but can persist into the summer. It is often

confused with Scab as the symptoms are not dissimilar. Some individuals can tolerate quite a significant burden, without showing any clinical signs or discomfort. Other show rubbing and wool loss. The parasites (Scab mites vs Lice) can be easily differentiated under the microscope. Infestations naturally reduce as summer approaches, aided by shearing. If one animal is diagnosed it is recommended to treat the whole flock or group, ideally after shearing.

Treat with pour-on Delta/Cypermethrins, though some resistance has been reported.

Ticks

Though not causing too much damage themselves, ticks do act as vectors for some important ovine diseases, namely:

- Tick-borne fever
- Lamb pyaemia
- Louping ill

Dense vegetation provides an ideal habitat for some of the tick life stages. However, it is when the adults latch on and feed that the risk of disease transmission occurs. Peak adult activity extends from February through to October.

Use of effective pour-on treatments such as *Crovect* or *Spot-on* will help control tick burdens for up to 10 weeks.

Keds

Red/brown wingless flies that attach with piercing mouthparts and feed. They spend their entire lifecycle on the sheep, so large infestations can lead to anaemia and poor body condition. Tends to be a winter problem.

Treat with Deltamethrin pour-ons such as *Crovect* or *Spot-on*.

Headfly

The size of houseflies the adults feed around the face, particularly the skin horn junction. They are only active in the summer and cause weeping, damaged skin lesions and much irritation.

Treat with Cypermethrin pour-ons such as *Ectofly* or *Crovect*. Severely affected individuals may require additional antibiotic and anti-inflammatory medication.

Blowfly Strike

A warm weather classic. Caused by the maggots of Green/Bluebottles and Black Blowflies. Eggs are laid around the breech and tail, with flies being attracted by the smell of decaying organic matter, urine and faeces. This first wave of eggs hatch and secrete digestive enzymes to aid in the attack on the skin and flesh. As this area festers, the smell attracts further flies and an increasing burden of maggots develop. Can cause horrific lesions, intense pain and ultimately death – either from systemic toxemia or euthanasia on welfare grounds.

Prevent with close flock monitoring, shearing, dagging and effective internal parasite control to minimize fleece soiling. If strike occurs only very rapid intervention has any chance of success.

Active ingredient	Administration	Chemical	Meat withdrawal period (days)	Sheep scab	Blowfly strike	Lice	Ticks
Diazinon 60%	Plunge dip	OP	49	C/P	C/P	C/P	C/P
Diazinon 62%	Plunge dip	OP	70	C/P	C/P	C/P	C/P
Dicyclanil 5%	Pour-on	IGR	40	-	P	-	-
Dicyclanil 1.25%	Pour-on	IGR	7	-	P	-	-
Cypermethrin 1.25%	Pour-on	SP	8	-	C/P	C/P	C/P
Alphacypermethrin 12.5%	Pour-on	SP	49	-	C/P	C/P	C/P
Deltamethrin 1%	Pour-on	SP	35	-	C	C	C
Cyromazine 6%	Pour-on	IGR	28	-	P	-	-
Moxidectin 1%	Injection	ML	70	C/P	-	-	-
Moxidectin 2%	Injection	ML	104	C/P	-	-	-
Doramectin 1%	Injection	ML	63	C	-	-	-
Ivermectin 1%	Injection	ML	37	C	-	-	-

www.noahcompendium.co.uk

OP = Organophosphate, IGR = Insect Growth Regulator, SP = Synthetic Pyrethroid, ML = Macrocytic Lactone, C = Curative, P = Protective

Summer 2014



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What and when are the risks...?

www.beefandlamb.ahdb.org.uk

Other, non-parasitic skin diseases to watch out for are Orf (contagious pustular dermatitis), Staphylococcal infections, ringworm, fleece rot, photosensitization and not forgetting sunburn.

Prevention is always better than cure, but prompt recognition and effective intervention will make all the difference.

Speak to your vet to determine your optimum preventative strategy and treatment protocols.

Call Bridget at the **George Livestock Health Supplies** on **01666 823035** option 2 for all your parasite product needs at prices competitive with the trade.



Best wishes,
Ian

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Sheep scab	H	H	H	M	M	M	M	M	M	H	H	H
Blowfly	L	L	L	M	H	H	H	H	H	M	M	L
Lice	H	H	H	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M
Ticks	L	M	M	M	M	H	H	H	M	M	L	L
Keds	H	H	H	M	M	M	M	M	M	H	H	H
Headfly	L	L	L	L	M	H	H	H	H	M	L	L

Risk: High Medium Low