



The GEORGE Farm Vets

June 2020

Buying in Sheep What are the risks and how to avoid them?

I hope everyone is enjoying the weather and not struggling too much for grass. Hopefully by the time this newsletter reaches you we will have had some rain.

If buying in replacement ewes, or bringing store lambs onto your ground, you do not want to risk buying in problems- this newsletter will talk through how this can be avoided.

Resistant worms

All new stock should be treated with **Startect** on arrival. This is a dual active wormer containing Derquatel (a new class of wormer) and Albamectin (a clear wormer). This treatment should clear out any resistant worms. They should be left on a yard for 24-48 hours post treatment so that any eggs from resistant worms are not passed onto pasture.

Previous advice was to use Zolvix however cases of Zolvix resistance have since been encountered. Startect has been unavailable for a while but it is now back in stock.



Scab

Gold standard would be to plunge dip all sheep on arrival. This treatment will also control blowfly, ticks, keds and lice.

If dipping is not practical then treatment with



moxidectin is the other option, although resistance to this drug is becoming increasingly common. Also, be aware that use of Cydectin 1% is potentially fatal in animals who have had Footvax so avoid this is unsure of the history.

Post Treatment

Following these treatments sheep should be quarantined on dirty pasture for **at least 4 weeks**. This means that if any resistant parasites have survived treatment, they will not contaminate clean pasture. This period is also important to let any possible issues come to light before mixing with your home stock.

Fluke

Treatment of incoming sheep for fluke should be based on:

1. Risk status of farm of origin
2. Risk status of your farm

Fluke requires an intermediate host to reproduce- the mud snail. Very dry farms may not have the appropriate habitat



for the snail and so the risk of fluke is low.

If fluke is a risk, they should be treated with a flukicide, but ideally not with triclabendazole because of increasing levels of resistance. Closantel and Nitroxylnil have not shown resistance in the UK. Animals should be retreated after six weeks to ensure any immature fluke missed at the first treatment are killed.

Fluke eggs can be passed for up to 3 weeks post treatment so keep on dry pastures between treatments and for 4 weeks post treatment.

Lameness

Check feet for signs of footrot or CODD before releasing onto pasture. I know this is a hassle but introduction of new strains of footrot, and especially CODD onto previously naïve farms can cause huge issues.



If any sheep show signs of lameness in the 4-week quarantine period then isolate them and treat according to lesion.

Vaccines

Don't forget to vaccinate incoming animals with any vaccines used on your flock, this is mainly Footvax and clostridial vaccinations as well as abortion vaccines for breeding stock.

Iceberg diseases

You should enquire with the farm of origin regarding the 5 Iceberg diseases of sheep:

- Maedi visna
- Ovine Johne's disease
- Caseous lymphadenitis
- Ovine pulmonary adenocarcinoma
- Border disease

These diseases may be present although not obvious, so it is worth asking the question before buying in.

If you need any further advice, then do not hesitate to contact us. Also, don't forget about our shop when ordering wormers, fly treatments and vaccines.

FREE WORM EGG COUNTS

As most of you know we had to cancel our last sheep group meeting due to COVID-19.

We are hoping to run a meeting looking at wormer resistance in the late Summer/ Autumn and would like to build up a picture of levels of worm resistance in the practice.

If you send in a faecal sample for worm egg count and treat based on this, then we will do a post treatment egg count FOR FREE to check for resistance. Ideally, the sampled sheep should be marked when the first sample is taken, then the same animals resampled 7 days post treatment for yellow drenches, and 14 days post treatment for white and clear drenches.

When dropping samples in, please ensure they are clearly labelled with your **NAME, FARM NAME, PHONE NUMBER.**

Those of you who are further from the practice can post in samples. They need to be packaged in a secure pot with the lid taped on securely and extra packaging to provide padding and prevent samples breaking/leaking in transit. Envelopes should be marked 'Diagnostic Specimens'. If you need some sample pots let us know and we can get some out to you.

Sampling guidelines

Samples should be fresh (taken within 1 hour of passing), kept in an airtight container and given to us for testing within 48 hours. If there is too much delay some eggs will hatch which can falsely reduce egg count. Sheep should be healthy and have had access to feed/ pasture before sampling

Ideally samples should be pooled as a mix of 10 different sheep, this can either be done by gathering sheep into a corner for a few minutes and collecting samples (not recommended if lame animals present in group), or watching when you are out shepherding and collecting samples as lambs get up.

We don't need loads and loads of faeces, we only need 3g, (or 4 teaspoons full if it is diarrhoeic) so a small pot is fine. Equally a tiny crumb of faeces is not enough.

For fluke testing, we have to send faeces off and need a larger amount (40g).

We run regular sheep discussion group meetings in the practice- if you would like to be added to the mailing list then please send your email address to farm@georgevetgroup.co.uk.

All the best,
Sarah

