

# Wormwise

## Newsletter

March 2016

Despite very strong indicators for El Nino this summer the phenomenon did not eventuate to any great degree. Based in the Southern Hawkes Bay, we have seen reasonably regular rainfall, but as I write this in late February, certain parts of the region are drying out. This may be considered normal for some areas.

- Trevor Cook

### Parasite management going into winter

Sheep and cattle farmers need to consider parasite management in autumn, for their animals going into winter, by using the two species to provide a lower parasite challenge for each other.

Farms with suckler beef herds will start weaning their beef calves. If keeping these calves on the farm, they should be grazed on an area where no young cattle have been present for some time. An ideal area would be where ewes and/or lambs have spent the summer. This may be challenging if not planned well in advance as, once a rotation has been established, the sward length may not be suitable for cattle or will take time to recover. Also the ewes and/or lambs will need to be given a different area. The lambs, which on most breeding properties will be replacement ewe lambs, will benefit from going into the area where the cows and calves have spent the summer. The upshot of these grazing changes will be to lower the larval challenge to the calves and lambs.

Other ways of providing low larval contamination feed for lambs and calves include:

- Forage crops
- New grass
- Hay or silage aftermath.

When using these methods of providing low challenge, be very mindful of providing refugia, as drenching young stock and moving them directly to low larval contamination forage is high risk.

Other risks include buying in trade lambs. Make sure that any bought in stock have a very robust quarantine drenching protocol in place. This will vary from farm to farm, but the gold standard would be that all incoming stock receive a novel drench active and are stood off the main grazing area for at least 24 hours. Areas for standing off include yards and very contaminated areas such as holding paddocks.

## Knockout drenching

Drench resistance is a significant threat to livestock farming. Not drenching enough, or using a drench that is not fully effective, halts production.

Reducing drench resistance is simple and effective. It can be done by:

- leaving some animals un-drenched;
- extending drench intervals;
- sharing summer/autumn grazing areas of lambs with ewes; and
- using effective combination products.

One method that has not yet been widely implemented is the use of a knockout treatment. This is very effective in slowing resistance selection.

Knockout drenching is applied to animals that have been regularly treated over the summer.

By autumn, a growing population of resistant worms can accumulate. That population can become a significant contamination source in the autumn – a contamination that can be taken into next season, possibly developing a population of worms with limited susceptibility to the drench actives being used. Giving a knockout drench in the autumn takes that resistant population out before it becomes a significant contributor to the worm population that can seed next season's worm challenges.

### **Q: What drench type should be used for a knockout drench?**

A: One that is known to be fully effective on the farm.

This means checking the efficacy rather than assuming a particular high potency, new drench family or combination will be effective. The rules around leaving some animals not treated, or just using combinations, do not apply when achieving the objectives of using a knockout drench.

Removing these accumulated resistant worms may seem an insignificant risk. But studies clearly show that frequent drenching of lambs and calves over summer/autumn can be a high risk for selecting resistant worms. Computer modelling has shown that using a knockout drench reduces this risk.

## Wormwise

Wormwise has led a tortuous path since its inception in 2006. Its formation was spurred by industry concerns over the level of anthelmintic resistance, which was exposed in a nationwide survey in 2005.

The need for an organisation that promoted sustainable worm management practices, and advocated for research into teaching and expansion of these practices, was very apparent.

For three years, Wormwise initiated a lot of activities such as newsletters, faecal egg count reduction tests, workshops and seminars. This was all strongly supported financially by the Sustainable Farming Fund (SSF) and with funds and resources from the then version of Beef+Lamb NZ, Meat and Wool. What followed was two to three years of reduced activity once the SSF funding finished. Over the last two to three years, a considerable effort has been made to restore Wormwise to its former status.

The outcome is that Wormwise is now in a trust structure, with the trustees being Beef + Lamb NZ; New Zealand Veterinary Association; Agcarm; and Ministry for Primary Industries.

Under this structure, other industry players will become part of Wormwise. A concerted effort is also being made to communicate with, and support, veterinarians promoting sustainable messages. There will be regular newsletters, workshops and seminars run by a team of presentation-fit veterinarians.

So watch out. Hiding from the messages will be harder and accessing the solutions will be easier.

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Wormwise implementation Group