

East Coast North Island Update

John Meban – Wormwise Facilitator

Summary

The East Coast of the North Island has experienced a wet and warm summer that has made parasite control planning essential. John Meban discusses some of the things you need to be thinking about and uses Wormwise principles to illustrate these thoughts and gives practical ways of avoiding drench resistance during this period.

The late summer early autumn period is a key decision-making time for parasite control on farm. This year is especially high risk in my area with frequent summer rain, very warm days, and high humidity. Ideal parasite development and survival conditions. In warmer districts the spectre of barbers- pole is front of mind. One of the key decisions is **if** and **when** to start long acting treatments and which animals to target. Faecal egg counts and larval cultures help support this decision making. The best information is your own information and unique to your farm. Locally, recent egg counts of well feed adult ewes have shown very low to negligible worm burdens despite ideal conditions for parasites. This triggers the question; do we treat too many animals without significant parasite challenge just to be on the safe side? There are potential consequences, as unnecessary use of long acting products can increase selection pressure for parasite resistance, so it is not a decision to take lightly. Long acting products used prudently have a place in many drenching programmes, but it is a matter of weighing up the risks and taking the appropriate mitigation steps. Some common ways of mitigating long acting drench use is by:

- Leaving some animals in a mob untreated, mainly for adult animals – it can be a risk to leave young stock un-drenched
- Only treating the most at risk animals
- Following treated animals in a rotation with less susceptible animals
- Sending treated animals directly to the works once withholding periods have been met
- Using an Exit drench.

What is an Exit drench? An exit drench is a drench administered to all animals previously given a long-acting drench. An exit drench ideally is an effective combination drench containing different drench families to the long-acting drench and preferably a novel or new active. If you have done a recent FECRT this gives you good information around which to base the choice of effective drench families on your farm.

Some Wormwise principles used in this article:

Wormwise principle 2: Well-fed animals are less affected by worms than those under nutritional stress

Wormwise agreed principle 3: Older animals are generally less susceptible to worms than younger ones, and at times, can be used to reduce the number of infective larvae on pastures

Wormwise principle 10: The way in which you use drenches and manage worms can change the rate at which you select for resistant worms

Wormwise principle 11: Every farm is unique, so effective worm management may be different for each farm.

Wormwise agreed principle 12: Use of long-acting drenches may hasten the development of drench resistance