



PARASITE FORECAST June 2015 – Summary

Local farm conditions may change, consult your vet.

Effective worm control should be part of your veterinary health plan.

For the full forecast please go to www.nadis.org.uk

The UK monthly temperature for April was well above the 1961-1990 monthly average suggesting an early hatch of *N. battus* eggs present on contaminated pastures and a below-average risk of disease in most flocks lambing in March and April this spring. However, this is a generalised forecast and local conditions may vary therefore consult your veterinary surgeon if in doubt. (www.nadis.org.uk).

PARASITIC GASTROENTERITIS (PGE)

- Lambs grazing contaminated pastures will need anthelmintic treatment(s) to limit the build up of infective larvae on pasture (mid summer rise). The timing of the first suppressive anthelmintic treatment for lambs will depend upon the ewe anthelmintic treatment at turnout (whether a short- or long-acting preparation), grazing conditions, stocking density and weather.
- Lambs grazing safe pastures should not require anthelmintic treatment until around 3-4 month-old.
- Performance (see targeted anthelmintic treatment section below) and worm egg counts of lambs from June onwards can be used to guide anthelmintic treatments. Pooled faecal samples from approximately 10 lambs will guide treatment.
- Prolonged local dry weather conditions can delay the larval challenge to lambs grazing contaminated pastures, with a return to infectivity when wet weather arrives.
- Pasture that has not been grazed by sheep until mid-summer (e.g. silage aftermath) may be regarded as 'safe grazing' and used for weaned lambs because over-wintered larvae will have exhausted their energy stores and died before mid-summer.
- 'Safe grazing' is an important component of the farm's sustainable parasite control programme and must be used to greatest benefit.
- Remember to include rams in the farm's parasite control programme because they are fully susceptible to PGE. It will take at least two months of good grazing for a ram to gain one unit of condition score; target of 3.5 at mating in October/November.

Targeted anthelmintic treatment (TST)

- Targeted anthelmintic treatment selects only those lambs for treatment that are failing to meet expected growth rates.
- Lambs are weighed every 3-4 weeks.
- In general, only 40-60 per cent of lambs require anthelmintic treatment which saves money.
- This strategy greatly reduces the likelihood of selecting for resistant strains of worms because such a large number of lambs are not treated.
- Targeted anthelmintic treatment should prolong the efficacy of Groups 2 and 3 anthelmintics without recourse to Groups 4 and 5 anthelmintics which are much more expensive.

- Electronic identification and automated weight recording simplifies TST.
- Regular weighing also identifies poor growth which may be caused by trace element deficiencies, overstocking etc., and prompt a management review.

Shearing

- Shearing reduces the risk of blowfly strike in adults (see May parasite forecast for a review of other prevention measures).
- Shearing allows direct assessment of body condition scores of the whole flock and thereby ewe nutrition during the first 2-3 months of lactation.

CATTLE NEMATODES

- Cattle receiving prophylactic anthelmintics must remain on the same pasture during the entire grazing season or be moved to safe grazing.
- Strategic regimes based on products with prolonged persistence against *Ostertagia ostertagi* may allow the build-up of pasture populations of those worm species against which they have poorer efficacy or little persistent effect, for example *Cooperia* species and *Nematodirus helvetianus*, which may cause problems later in the year.
- Incidents of clinical PGE in cattle peak during August/September.

LUNGWORM

- Lungworm disease appears from June onwards in unvaccinated calves, those cattle without an effective anthelmintic programme, and naïve adults.
- Early signs include coughing, initially after exercise then at rest, and an increased respiratory rate.
- Affected cattle rapidly lose weight and body condition.

Lungworm infestation from a farm where vaccination was not used.



Parasite Control should be part of your veterinary health plan, consult your vet

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