

June 2021 Sheep Newsletter

Tickborne Diseases

There are at least twenty species of ticks indigenous to the UK, the most common being *Ixodes ricinus*, more commonly known as the sheep tick. *Ixodes Ricinus* is the vector for a number of diseases which affect livestock such as louping ill, tickborne fever, babesiosis (redwater fever in cattle), and tick pyaemia. The same ticks can transmit Lyme disease, louping ill and tickborne fever to humans, dogs and horses.



There is currently an increasing awareness of ticks and tickborne diseases in sheep. The prevalence of ticks is spreading geographically and they are being found in greater numbers. Factors which are likely to be contributing to this are:

- Climate change; in particular warm wet summers
- A reduction in sheep dipping
- Environmental biodiversity management strategies in relation to habitat
- The marked increase in deer numbers acting as tick maintenance hosts

Tickborne Fever

The causal agent of tickborne fever is an organism called ***Anaplasma phagocytophilum***. Spread by ticks while sucking blood, the organism affects the white blood cells of the sheep. This leads to a serious impairment of its immune system, leaving the animal more prone to suffering other infections which, under normal circumstances the immune system would fight off.

In some cases a fever is noticed for a few days. However, in many cases the main sign seen is the effect of the loss of immunity within the flock..... an increased susceptibility to other infections such as pasteurellosis, clostridial disease, worms, metritis (sometimes leading to abortions) and many more.

We have recently had a flock affected by tickborne fever in which some growing lambs were far thinner than expected, had a very high worm burden and were suffering from lice and bacterial skin disease.

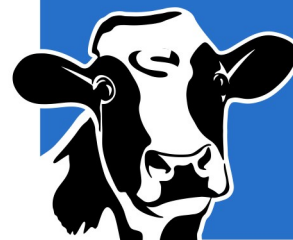
Louping ill

Louping ill is a viral disease affected by ticks. It causes neurological signs leading to seizure, paralysis and death or sometimes sudden death. In some cases concurrent infection with *Anaplasma phagocytophilum* can lead to immunosuppression and therefore worsened problems with louping ill.

Tick pyaemia

Young lambs (up to 12 weeks old) can be affected by tick pyaemia, which causes abscesses in the tendons, joints, muscles and brain and causes 'crippled lambs' with severe lameness, paralysis of the backend, ill thrift and death. Up to 30% of the lambs in a group can be affected in a severely affected flock. There is no treatment.

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Control

Apart from louping ill, where vaccination can play a role (although currently not available), the main way to control diseases transmitted by ticks is to treat at risk sheep with an acaricide treatment.

Below is the SCOPS (sustainable control of parasites in sheep) guide to products available for blowflies and sheep. If you would like any further advice please give us a call.

Replacements

If you have suffered problems due to ticks on your land then it is important to be mindful of this when purchasing replacement animals which may have come from low risk areas. Introduce new animals to potential problem pastures well ahead of the breeding season and use acaricides where appropriate.



Treatment and control options for blowfly strike

This information is provided by SCOPS as a guide. SCOPS does everything within its power to ensure the information is up-to-date and correct but product choices remain the responsibility of the prescriber and user. Always read the manufacturer's instructions before use. Withdrawal periods are subject to change and it is the user's responsibility to ensure withdrawal periods are adhered to.

Product	Company	Chemical name	Ectoparasites control			Meat withdrawal period
			Blowflies	Lice	Ticks	
CLIK	Elanco Animal Health	Dicyclanil (IGR)	16 weeks protection	None	None	40 days
CLIK EXTRA	Elanco Animal Health	Dicyclanil (IGR)	19 weeks protection	None	None	40 days
CLIKZIN	Elanco Animal Health	Dicyclanil (IGR)	Eight weeks protection	None	None	7 days
Crovect	Elanco Animal Health	Cypermethrin	Treats and 6-8 weeks protection	Kills existing lice	Up to 10 weeks	8 days
Ectofly 12.5mg/ml	Bimeda	Cypermethrin	Treats and 6-8 weeks protection	Kills existing lice	Treatment only	8 days
Deltanil	Virbac	Deltamethrin	Treatment only	4-6 week reduction in incidence	6 weeks	35 days
Dysect	Zoetis	Alpha-cypermethrin	Treats and 8-10 weeks protection	Kills existing lice	8-12 weeks	49 days
Fly & Lice Spot On	Zoetis	Deltamethrin	Treatment only	4-6 week reduction in incidence	Up to 6 weeks	35 days
Spotinor 10mg/ml	Norbrook	Deltamethrin	Treatment only	4-6 week reduction in incidence	6 weeks	35 days
Vectocert 1.25%	Downland	Cypermethrin	Treats and 6-8 weeks protection	Kills existing lice	8 weeks	8 days
Vetrazin	Elanco Animal Health	Cyromazine (IGR)	10 weeks protection	None	None	28 days
Zermasect Sheep	Downland	Alpha-cypermethrin	Treats and 8-10 weeks protection	Kills existing lice	8-12 weeks	49 days

Practice News

The practice is currently trying to be as sustainable as possible for the environment. As a result if you wish to have your invoices emailed to you rather than posted please let us know. As a practice we are also looking at going forward working with renewable energy. We are already using recycled paper and recycling where we can in the practice.

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