



Tackling Wormer Resistance

October 24

Worm burdens are all too familiar a territory to sheep producers but become an ever more persistent burden to the industry. Recent estimates suggest potential economic impacts of £41 million due to production losses and treatment costs.

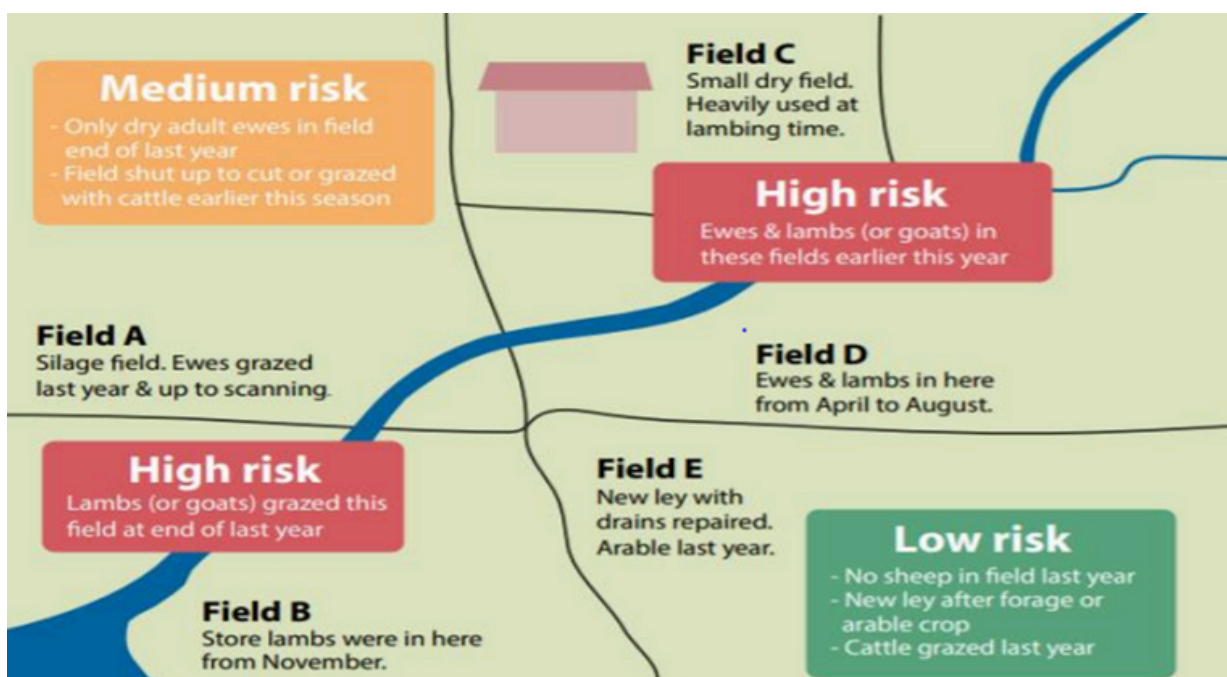
The use of wormers has provided a plaster to this problem for a long time, however the development of resistance has been a major talking point within the industry and an increasingly realised issue on farm for a lot of producers.

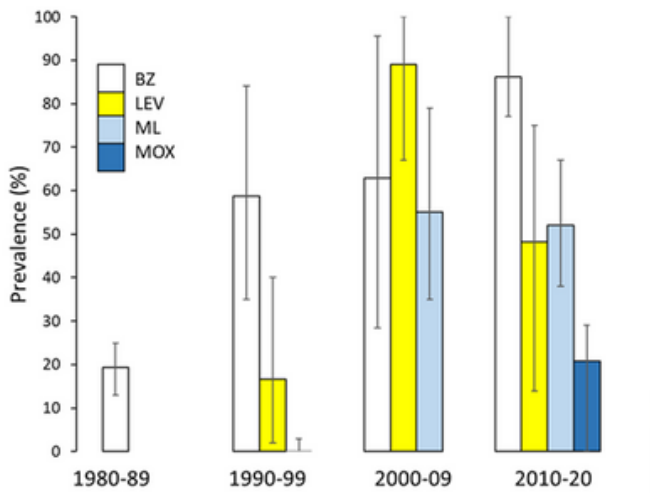
We have recently reviewed wormer resistance across several sheep farms following uptake of the **Animal Health and Welfare Pathway** which has revealed multiple instances of wormer resistance across multiple categories. Similarly, large scale studies have shown a unanimous global increase in parasite resistance to available wormers with white (benzimidazole) drenches in particular becoming more and more ineffective in the last decade.

The alternatives

In light of wormer resistance emerging, multiple alternatives have been explored. Crucially, parasite control strategies that do not rely on wormer use are usually less 'quick-fix' and more 'long-game'. Many of the elements of this approach will be familiar already and a reference to SCOPS is recommended but consist of:

- Routine WEC monitoring to target and reduce wormer use in lambs, monitor wormer success and identify high risk ground
- Risk based grazing: moving animals strategically, for example to avoid high risk ground for naïve lambs
- Exploring EBV's and breeding for worm control
- Using wormers appropriately: effective quarantine dosing, dosing to weight with calibrated guns





Practice Farms Tested	21
Awaiting results	4
No Treatment	9
No Resistance	2
White Resistance	1
Yellow Resistance	2 (+1 concern)
Clear Resistance	3

Breeding for worm control

A phenomenon that is likely familiar to most producers is that within a group certain animals are affected more than others (often 'poor-doers'.) Sheep have a natural immunity to worms that is characterised by two components; **immunity to the parasites and tolerance to the damage they cause**. Fundamentally, both of these characteristics have a genetic basis that can be utilised when making breeding choices.

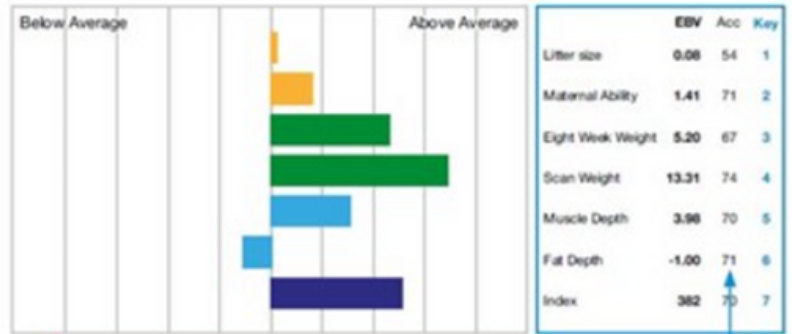
Where possible sourcing Rams from recorded flocks with known FEC EBV's should be part of the parasite control strategy within your flock.

AHWP Review and identifying resistance on farm

The AHWP review has been available for the last 2 years and provides a cost-free way of identifying resistance trends on farm that will ultimately become a bottleneck for production in subsequent years.

The process consists of 3 steps as below:

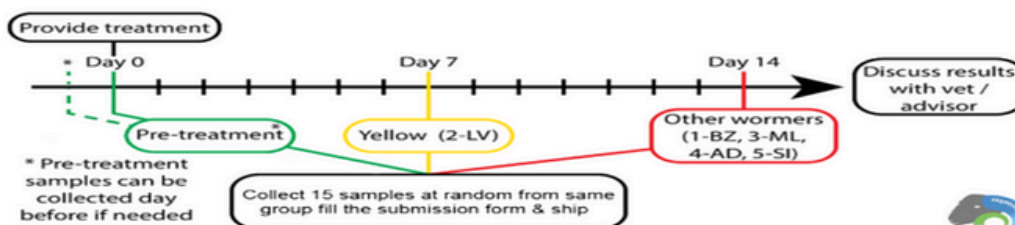
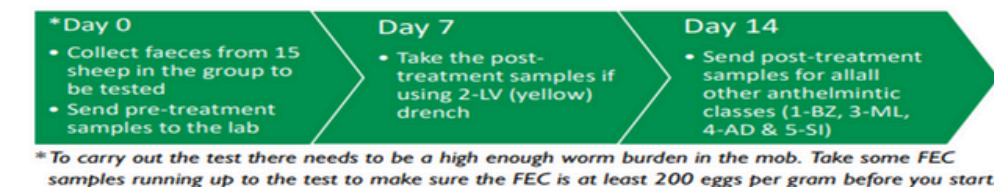
- 1) Sign up online before doing anything else: your vet cannot do the visit until you have received a reference number. Contact the practice or your vet for advice on finding the link on the Government website if having difficulty finding it. You have 6 months from application to organise a vet visit and submit samples.
- 2) FEC sampling and vet visit : Once you have a reference number, submit worm egg counts as below. Organise this in conjunction with a vet visit which can be used to discuss any other areas of concern. Use prior WEC's to identify when a wormer is needed to make the most of this sampling.
- 3) Vet report: Your vet will write a report detailing the results of WEC and discussion at the visit. You can then submit this to release the funding; £436 for the initial review and £639 following further disease testing carried out within 10 months.



Accuracy values are percentage figures. The higher the figure, the more accurate the EBV. They indicate how much information has been used to calculate an animal's EBVs



Worming Treatment Check Protocol



Best wishes,

Will Balhatchet
BVSc MRCVS

COMING UP

CHARITY FARMERS SKITTLES EVENING



**@ The Golden Swan, Wilcot, SN9 5NN
On Thursday 10th October at 7pm**

**@ Old Royal Ship, Luckington, SN14 6PA
On Wednesday 16th October at 7pm**

**@ The Farmers Arms, Guiting Power, GL54 5TZ
On Wednesday 23rd October at 7pm**

**@ The Anchor Inn, Epney Saul, Glos GL2 7LN
On Wednesday 30th October at 7pm**



If you would like to attend any of the above or buy our charity calendar, please contact us:
01666 823035 or farm@georgevetgroup.co.uk

Charity calendar £10 each -
all proceeds split between:

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