



EWES NEWS

Pre-lamb Parasite Management Strategies

Dave Robertson BVSc, BSc



We have produced many articles and talks on parasite management in sheep. The thing about the topic, is that it is very changeable and varied due to the season and stock pressures.

Trials on capsules have shown that treated ewes are heavier, lambs are heavier at weaning and ewes do not have dags the same. However we have always maintained that long acting treatments need to be used strategically and sustainably and the response will depend on your situation. Two tooth twinning ewes are always the class of stock that will yield the biggest economic return from a long acting worm treatment. Mixed-age ewe response requires some discussion.

Many discussions about what product to apply pre-lamb occur at this time of year and there are some variables to consider. Over the page is an attempt to illustrate the decision making process with some of our real time examples of clients. **Continued Page 2**



Veterinary Centre Calendar Photo Competition

We are looking for photos for this year's Veterinary Centre Calendar. Specifically this month we are wanting photos of rural kids in action on farms throughout our district, from Waimate to the Maniototo and everything in between. So get clicking and take some great shots of your tribe in action. There will be prizes for winning photos and as well as going into the mix for the Veterinary Centre Calendar, there will be a spot on the front page of September Ewesnews.

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|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Veterinary Centre Oamaru | Ph 03-434 5666 |
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| Veterinary Centre Palmerston | Ph 03-465 1291 |
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Pre-lamb Parasite Management Strategies

CLIENT CASE STUDIES

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Targeted capsules with some refugia.

1. Bruce and Penny Roy with sons Ian and Paul, run a productive flock of 8000 Coopworths in Macraes. Following a Reduction Test completed 4 years ago, they switched from injectable drench options to using BIONIC capsules strategically. Last year the capsule was given to ~80% of the twin bearing ewes. The better condition twins and singles are given an oral drench of Matrix Hi Min, or not drenched at all. This year Bionics are only being used on twinning 2 tooth's and BCS 2 mixed aged ewes, as they are not scanning the main line of ewes this year. A mob of 600 older lighter ewes will get an Extender SeCo capsule with a primer drench. The SeCos have a nil meat with-hold so they give more flexibility if ewes are to be sent to the works early or sold all-counted. The Roy's like the capsule option because it keeps the ewes in good order, dag free and ensures minimal worm challenged lambs in the spring. Being a double combination drench with a more consistent payout of drench for 100 days, it is more potent than other options. A constant trickle of selenium and cobalt is also a bonus. By leaving some ewes un-capsuled it is felt that some susceptible worms are maintained in the system. Paul would like to follow-up with another Reduction Test in the future to assess whether the assumptions around worm refugia are correct.

"A key Wormwise take home message is to use where possible the most effective combination drench in conjunction with some level of proactive and planned refugia".

2. Christine, Tony and Wayne Bugden farm 1000 Romney ewes at Herbert. Over the past few years all stock have been treated with EweGuard. Following a recent Wormwise workshop and a follow up worm control planning session they decided to implement a targeted treatment regime to

both increase the return on spend and to mitigate any resistance development.

This year stock have been treated as follows -

- triplet bearing ewes, twinning two tooth's and in lamb hoggets have been given Exodus long acting injection. This will give greater long acting worm control to the highest worm-risk group compared with standard moxidectin.
- the mixed aged twinning ewes were drenched orally with Matrix.
- single ewes were left as refugia.
- a dose of Vet LSD and a clostridial 5 in 1 was also administered to all stock.

Exodus treated stock will get an oral drench of Matrix at the end of it's action to clean out any worms that might be surviving through the "tail" period.

The important aspect is to target the long acting to ewes that will benefit the most and give the greatest return. The single ewes are providing a valuable source of refugia .

So following the pre-lamb discussion with this plan, they will spend much less on animal health drenches and stand to gain more from the targeted approach. Even a 0.5kg increase in the long acting targeted stock will return an extra \$2000 in this scenario.

One of the other objectives was to reduce the pressure being applied to a single active drench family.



Ian and Paul Roy with Black B (unimpressed cat) and Nigel (bewildered Beardie).



Tony (pictured) and Wayne Bugden are trying a targeted approach to pre lamb anthelmintic treatments this winter.

Trace Elements for In-Lamb Ewes

Kevin, Edith and son James Cromie farm about 4000 mostly Romney cross ewes at their Waihao Downs property. They have a highly prolific flock and want to do all they can to ensure the maximum number of live lambs hit the ground and survive.

LSD gives them the assurance they are not missing out on any minerals that may impact lamb survival. Mineral deficiency can be a significant contributor to lamb losses. South Island soils are known to be low in iodine and selenium. We also know that brassicas have compounds that bind up iodine and make it less available.

James said each of the drenches given to their in-lamb stock has Vet LSD mixed with it. They have been using Vet LSD for near on a decade and have no intention of ceasing.

Vet LSD ticks all the boxes from a veterinary research angle and also has a positive endorsement from those who use it. Whilst three doses are recommended over the term of pregnancy even one dose late pregnancy is worthwhile, especially for the vitamin E component, which has benefits for lamb production and vigour.



Conveyor Catch Up

Chris and Megan Chave run a conveyor contracting business out of Waimate and at this time of year are busy much of the time administering pre-lamb animal health treatments. We touched base to ask what they were seeing on the farms they service this winter.

How are the sheep farmers you visit feeling about the winter? - There is definitely more optimism with the rainfall to guarantee spring growth and good pasture covers for lambing.

How is your business going in what has been a tough couple of years? - We operate through South Canterbury and North Otago. Our business has remained consistent with a busy pre-lamb conveyor, tailing and dipping coming up. We find that our clients use us to administer multiple animal health products come pre-lamb and pre-tup and they have found using the conveyor more time efficient.

What pre lamb treatments are clients favouring this year? - Farmers are tending to give their 'multiples' (ewes) capsules or long acting vaccination versus single ewes receiving oral drenching. Due to the drought and lower ewe numbers on some farms, condition score on ewes is higher and they are looking at other options as opposed to the more expensive capsule and long acting drench i.e oral drench, LSD.

Are there any new areas of service that conveyor contractors are moving into? Ewe inspection (mouth, udder and feet) after weaning lambs is a newer service.



Nilvax Use

Our Nilvax special this winter has not gone unnoticed. Veterinarian Angus Gibb outlines Angus Gibb Nilvax and its best use scenarios.

Nilvax is a 5 in 1 clostridial vaccine combined with a Levamisole drench in one injection. There is no prolonged action against intestinal parasites from the levamisole. The levamisole is also an immune stimulant that causes a greater antibody response in the ewe compared to other 5 in 1 vaccines. So some use it when the 5 in 1 booster is given more than six weeks prior to the start of lambing.

We recommended that Nilvax is not used as a sole pre-lamb treatment for the control of internal parasites due to the drench component being a single active. Nilvax works well as a primer drench for a prolonged action capsule or injection as it is a different action family and has good efficacy against adult roundworms.

Doses of 3 or more times those recommended can cause symptoms of levamisole toxicity. To minimise the risk of toxicity;

- weigh stock prior to vaccination to set dose
- Do not use in combination with another drench containing Levamisole
- Reduce stress due to adverse weather conditions, poor nutrition, prolonged yarding or dehydration as it increases susceptibility to toxicity.

Metabolic Disease in Sheep - Dave Robertson BVSc, BSc



Metabolic disease in multiple bearing ewes can occur in the last month of pregnancy in certain conditions.

We have got better at feeding ewes in late pregnancy, especially since scanning came along. But there are still situations where heavy pregnant ewes can end up going down with metabolic disease.

Pregnancy toxæmia - ENERGY deficiency/fatty liver syndrome

There are two syndromes:

- prolonged under feeding.
- sudden stress or fasting.

A multiple bearing ewe needs twice what they would need when dry. That is 2 kg of dry matter per day in late pregnancy compared with mid winter maintenance of 1.1kg DM. Prolonged under feeding or yarding or storms can trigger an energy crisis. Lack of exercise has also been associated with it.

The treatment of preg-tox is difficult. It is not always just a case of giving energy and away they go. In the latter stages, the liver gets fatty and in a ketotic state. Kidney and liver failure are common end points. Early and vigorous treatment is essential to salvaging any ewes.

Clinical signs start as a ewe off on their own depressed, not eating, maybe staggy. They can appear blind and star-grazing. They have wool-pull and in the latter stages get twitchy, champing and frothing at mouth and down they go from there.

Treatment: Energy supplements can help (oral ketol and sub cut dextrose) if organ failure has not kicked on. For inducing labour in special cases emergency caesarean can reduce drain on the ewe and possibly save the lambs.

LOW CALCIUM - milk fever

The clinical signs of low calcium look similar to preg-tox. However the

response to **50-100mL of calcium under the skin** can be very dramatic and satisfying, hence response to treatment is a good

way to diagnose the problem.

Some situations where low calcium can arise are complex and varied but some general situations are:

- Under feeding and/or sudden stress (storms, post shearing)
- Fodder beet only diet (no green tops for more than 3 days). The rumen shuts down with lack of protein and doesn't absorb enough calcium.
- Sudden switch to crop or lush green feed (Italian) which has lower dietary calcium.
- Grazing limed paddocks then shifting to non-limed area.
- High amounts of wheat/barley which is low in calcium and phosphorus.
- Plantain only swords pre-lamb.

As with all these conditions prevention is the key through feed planning and understanding of feed requirements in late pregnancy.

A dose of Vet-LSD pre-lamb can give (amongst other things) a boost of Vitamin D which is required for calcium absorption.

If feeding high risk green feeds giving quality baleage with 10gm of causmag (MgO)/ewe sprinkled on it would go a long way to making sure the ewe mobilises bone stores of calcium.

Summary:

If you're seeing a few metabolic cases this could be a tip of the iceberg indicator of a larger subclinical issue with feed.

Treatmentwise most farmers should have a slab of Glucalpos, 50mL syringe and some ketol (for energy) handy for any suspect ewes. Please discuss with a vet if you are having issues with this.



The products to deal with clinical metabolic diseases in sheep



Cattle Lice

This is the time of year we see scratchy cattle appearing with lice infestations. Lice obviously cause a lot of irritation and can be associated with ill thrift and cattle wrecking gates and posts, etc.

A salvage treatment early spring may be required (better to treat in early winter). The critical thing is to dose all cattle with an effective dose and product. Temporal will treat only lice, whereas many worm drench pour-ons and injectable drenches will also kill lice, but they are not all equal. Genesis, Eclipse, Dectomax and moxidectin pour-ons are generally very good options.