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August 2018 Parasite Forecast

Weather for June in the UK has been hot and dry when compared to the long-term monthly average. The provisional mean temperature was 14.8 °C, 1.8 °C above the 1981-2010 average with rainfall only 48% of the long-term monthly average.

Above average monthly temperatures were observed across all regions of the UK in both June and the previous 3 months (April - June), whilst rainfall figures were below the monthly average for June and the preceding 3 months across all regions of the UK.

SHEEP

PARASITIC GASTROENTERITIS (PGE)

PGE is generally considered a disease of lambs in their first grazing season. Typical signs include:

- Loss of appetite
- Diarrhoea
- Dehydration
- Weight loss

The hot, dry conditions experienced over previous months are likely to reduce disease risk in most instances. However, groups of lambs grazing "dirty" pasture may still be at risk.

Advised actions include:

- Monitoring for signs of PGE.
- For lambs currently grazing dirty pasture:
 - Dose and move at weaning to safe pasture (eg. silage aftermath) where available. Animals should be moved 4-5 days after dosing to prevent anthelmintic resistance.
 - Where safe pasture is unavailable:
 - Use targeted selective treatments based on monthly liveweight gain or on faecal egg counts
- Where anthelmintic treatments are administered, it is strongly advised to check efficacy through post-weaning worm egg counts.
- After weaning ewes should not require further anthelmintic treatment for roundworms. However, for rams (which are more susceptible to roundworm infections) it is advisable to check burdens through faecal egg counts at this time.

HAEMONCHOSIS (THE BARBER'S POLE WORM, *HAEMONCHUS CONTORTUS*)

Cases of haemonchosis have been reported [in July](#), and may continue to occur into August. Outbreaks are sporadic and difficult to predict.

- Acute onset disease is characterised by:
 - Anaemia
 - Fluid accumulation
 - Sudden death
- Chronic infections may also occur.
- Both lambs and ewes are considered at risk for haemonchosis.
- Diagnosis can be aided by:
 - Post-mortem
 - Worm egg counts

Where outbreaks occur, treatment using most anthelmintic products, including some flukicides, are effective.

As local conditions can vary considerably, why not call the practice to discuss control measures and treatments relevant to your farm? The most effective way to control all parasites is as part of a veterinary parasite control plan so contact the practice for further details.

The NADIS Parasite Forecast is based on detailed monthly Met Office data for each of the 40km² areas across the UK. Weather conditions directly affect the likely levels of parasite activity. Disease incidence will also depend on farm management, grazing and treatment history. Individual farm and field conditions may vary, so consult your vet as part of a veterinary parasite control plan.

BLOWFLY STRIKE

Blowfly may continue to be a problem over the summer months. Animals with soiled fleece around their back ends, footrot lesions and/or open skin wounds are particularly at risk. Appropriate worm control will help reduce fleece soiling, whilst dagging reducing risk in animals with diarrhoea and soiled fleece.

Control should be pursued through the application of appropriate products such as pour-ons or dipping. For a more thorough overview of blowfly risk, control and prevention please see the dedicated NADIS blowfly forecast at alerts.nadis.org.uk.

CATTLE

PARASITIC GASTROENTERITIS (PGE, GUTWORM)

The recent hot, dry weather is likely to have decreased the survival of larvae on pasture. However, young stock in their first grazing season may still be at risk of type-1 ostertagiosis.

Advised actions include:

- Monitoring for signs of disease.
- Where outbreaks occur treat all calves in the affected group.
- Move calves to safe grazing such as hay or silage aftermath where available.
- Continue targeted selected treatments based on liveweight gain, or faecal egg counts.
- On set-stocked pastures where calves have received strategic dosing through the season, it is advisable to carry out faecal egg counts to monitor the success of anthelmintic treatments.

LUNGWORM

Risk of lungworm infection may continue during the summer months. It is therefore advisable to continue monitoring for signs of disease:

- Widespread coughing in the group.
- Increased respiratory rate and difficulty breathing.
- Rapid loss of weight and body condition.
- Milk drop in lactating cattle.
- Death in heavy infections.

Unvaccinated calves in their first grazing season are most likely to be affected.

Where outbreaks occur, treat with anthelmintics and remove affected cattle to "safe" pasture (e.g. aftermath) or house in a well ventilated building.