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July 2018 Parasite Forecast

May 2018 was one of the hottest on record, with a mean temperature of 12.1 °C, 1.7 °C above the long-term national average. Rainfall was 31% below the long-term national average. Dry conditions experienced across the majority of the UK for the first two weeks, with showers and thunderstorms increasingly widespread in the second half of the month.

SHEEP

MONEPANTEL RESISTANCE CONFIRMED IN THE UK

A [recent publication](#) documenting the first case of resistance to monepantel (trade name Zolvix) in the UK is a timely and important reminder to sheep farmers and their advisors. The sustainable control of parasites in sheep (SCOPS) group advice on orange and purple wormers:

- 4-AD and 5-SI group wormers should be incorporated into worm control programmes on all sheep farms. This approach is designed to help prolong the life of 1-BZ, 2-LV and 3-ML groups.
- Group 4-AD or 5-SI wormers should only be used for quarantine and mid/late season as a 'one off' annual drench for lambs, alternating use between these two groups.
- Groups 4-AD and 5-SI should only be used at other times under veterinary direction.

PARASITIC GASTROENTERITIS (PGE)

Weaning lambs are particularly at risk during the summer months. Monitor for signs of PGE - loss of appetite, diarrhoea, dehydration, weight loss and death. Lower levels of infection can impact liveweight gain. Where available, move animals to "safe" grazing (e.g. hay or silage aftermath). Monitor performance by weight gain, and faecal egg counts for evidence of infection.

Where treatment with an anthelmintic is indicated, consider [SCOPS guidelines](#):

- Targeted selected treatments (TST).
- Dose wormer by weight and check calibration of dosing guns/syringes.
- Rotate worming groups.
- Perform pre- and post-treatment egg counts to test treatment efficacy.

If treating AND moving animals to safe pasture, delay moving for 4-5 days.

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

Disease in the UK is sporadic, but onset can be sudden and severe, characterised by anaemia, oedema (fluid accumulation e.g. "bottle jaw") and sudden death. Chronic infections also occur, characterised by weight loss, anaemia and loss of appetite. Both lambs and ewes are considered at risk.

Treatment can be carried out using most anthelmintic products, although resistance to white drenches (1-BZ) has been reported in the UK. Some flukicide products are also effective.

MONEZIA TAPEWORMS

Adult tapeworm segments may be seen in the faeces of lambs during summer months. These are generally not considered as a cause of disease in livestock.

BLOWFLY

Blowfly can be a serious problem at this time of year. Vigilance is advised, particularly in animals with soiled fleece.

For a more thorough overview of blowfly risk, control and prevention please see the dedicated NADIS blowfly forecast at <http://alerts.nadis.org.uk/>.

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PARASITIC GASTROENTERITIS (PGE, GUTWORM)

Calves and young stock in their first grazing season are most at risk, although adult cattle may also experience performance limiting disease if grazing heavily contaminated pastures. Without strategic dosing, disease risk peaks during the late summer months.

Autumn born calves and cattle not receiving strategic dosing should remain set stocked or moved to hay or silage aftermath where available. Turning spring born calves out onto "safe" grazing to minimise exposure. Monitor for signs of PGE (loss of appetite, loss of weight and body condition and diarrhoea). In lactating dairy cattle a bulk-tank antibody ELISA is available to monitor infection levels. Where dosing is to be performed:

- Treat all animals in the affected group in outbreaks of disease.
- Otherwise, targeted selective treatment (TST) is recommended ([COWS group guidelines](#)).
- Dosing by weight and checking calibration of dosing guns/syringes/applicators.
- Rotate worming groups.

Consider faecal egg counts to check for effective anthelmintic dosing.

LUNGWORM

Lungworm infection (or "husk") appears from June onwards. Outbreaks are difficult to predict, but associated with wetter summers and following periods of wet weather. Unvaccinated calves and animals not part of strategic dosing programmes should be considered at risk. Older cattle may also be at risk if they have not previously developed immunity.

In areas where lungworm is present, it is recommended first season calves are vaccinated prior to turn-out.

Monitor for infection. Signs include: widespread coughing, increased respiratory rate and difficulty breathing, rapid loss of weight and body condition, milk drop and death.

Where infection is suspected: treat animals (consider withdrawal periods for lactating animals) and remove affected cattle to "safe" pasture (e.g. aftermath) or housed in a well ventilated building.

The NADIS Parasite Forecast is based on detailed monthly Met Office data for each of the 40sq km 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.