

Contact:

Phone:

Email:

## September 2018 Parasite Forecast

The hot, dry weather experienced over the summer months in 2018 has continued into July. The average temperature for the UK in July was 17.3 °C, 2.2 °C above the long-term average. Combined average temperatures for the preceding 3 months (May – July 2018) were above average across all regions of the UK. Rainfall in the UK in July was recorded at 71% of average. Combined average rainfall for the preceding 3 months (May – July 2018) were below average across all regions of the UK.

### FLUKE

The preliminary fluke forecast for 2018 was first published in August and predicts moderate to high risk in the north and west of Scotland, and low risk in most other areas. Acute disease is more common in sheep, with signs including:

- Sudden death in heavy infections.
- General dullness, anaemia and shortness of breath.
- Rapid weight loss, fluid accumulation.

Advised actions:

- Monitoring for signs of disease, including diagnostic testing.
- Where acute disease occurs, treatment with triclabendazole is recommended.
- It is also important to test for treatment efficacy.
- Risk of infection can be reduced by identifying high risk fluke pastures and avoiding grazing these during peak risk periods.

**Ask the practice for the NADIS fluke alert for your area.**

### SHEEP

#### PARASITIC GASTROENTERITIS (PGE)

PGE is a disease of lambs in their first grazing season. Look for signs of:

- Loss of appetite
- Diarrhoea
- Dehydration
- Weight loss

The hot, dry conditions experienced over the preceding months are likely to have reduced disease risk by increasing larval mortality, although certain groups of animals 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.
  - \* Leave animals on dirty pasture for 2-3 days prior to moving.
  - \* Aim to leave at least 10% of the flock untreated.
- Where safe pasture is unavailable:
  - \* Use targeted selective treatments (TSTs) based on monthly live weight gain.
- Where anthelmintic treatments are administered, check efficacy through worm egg counts:
  - Re-test 10-12 individuals at 7-14 days post treatment depending upon the product used.

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

Cases of haemonchosis are sporadic and difficult to predict.

- Both lambs and ewes are considered at risk for haemonchosis.
  - Acute disease is characterised by:
    - Anaemia and general fatigue.
    - Oedema or fluid accumulation, including bottle jaw.
    - Sudden death in heavy infections.
  - Chronic infections may also occur, characterised by progressive weight loss, anaemia and loss of appetite.
- Most anthelmintic products are effective against haemonchus, although some evidence of resistance to white drenches (1-BZ) has been reported previously in the 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 PGE:
  - Loss of appetite
  - Loss of weight and body condition
  - Profuse diarrhoea
- Continue targeted selected treatments based on liveweight gain, or faecal egg counts.
- If not done already, move calves to safe grazing such as hay or silage aftermath where available.
- Where outbreaks of ostertagiosis occur treat all calves in the affected group.

#### LUNGWORM

Lungworm larvae may survive drier periods of weather within faecal pats to be dispersed onto pasture en masse following periods of rainfall. Early signs of infection include:

- Widespread coughing in the group, initially after exercise then at rest.
- Increased respiratory rate and difficulty breathing
- Rapid loss of weight and body condition.
- Milk drop in lactating cattle.
- Death in heavy infections.

Where infection is suspected, treat animals with an anthelmintic and remove affected cattle to "safe" pasture (e.g. aftermath) or house in a well ventilated building.

**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 40km<sup>2</sup> 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.