



PARASITES FIELD-DAYS

June is a month where we tidy up any remaining compliance issues like herd leptospirosis vaccination and sign off the RVM consult, not forgetting the odd autumn herd calving to keep us from falling asleep at the wheel. Generally, June is a time to relax and recharge by way of conferences and field-day excursions. With this thought, I hope everyone came away from field-days with something desperately required to improve farm efficiency or just a big boy toy.

While enjoying the relative quiet and extended summer with one of the warmest autumns on record, not everything was taking it easy. Once the grass took off post reasonable rainfall, combined with warmer temperatures, this allowed the faecal hibernating parasite larvae to have their own field-day. The larvae migrate across and up pasture to the eagerly awaiting immature ruminant mouths. With young stock grazing lower than normal, combined with the awakened infective larvae stockpile, this led to the perfect parasite storm.

As a side issue, the same conditions have sparked a rodent explosion. As if there wasn't enough to worry about while trying to sleep in. I will let you deal with rodents in your own way but internal parasites will require a concerted effort to control, so not to affect young stock's long-term productivity.

Under substantial challenge, drenches can appear to be failing. This is the time to undertake 10-day post drench faecal samples. This will define drench efficacy or to determine if there are other factors at work, such as high protein/ low fibre diets where a repeat drench treatment may not be warranted.

Some thoughts on parasite control under these challenging conditions.

- If possible use an oral drench as generally these are more effective on all parasite species especially autumn Cooperia.
- Use triple active combinations to give greater efficacy in more situations plus slow resistance.
- Drench all cattle in mob as high challenges can weaken even the strongest, leaving no time for a selective drench program.
- Try to avoid drenching and then moving to a clean paddock, instead put the stock back where they have been.
- Avoid using pour-on products as the convenience is outweighed by increased risk of failure.
- If you have no choice, use a double active pour-on such as Eclipse. Keep the pour-on for yearling spring treatment to target the Ostertagia flush.
- Taking 10 fresh faecal samples from pasture should always be part of a parasite management package. Our clinics are set up for in house faecal egg counts.
- Less drenching when dry through April and May.
Drenching is now required late into autumn to early winter.

Written by Dr. Richard Porter

Just a friendly reminder to please contact the clinic to organise appointments rather than contacting vets directly, your compliance is much appreciated, thank you.

