New South Wales worm update

July 2012

LHPA DISTRICT REPORTS

Lachlan LHPA

Eliz Braddon, Young. (eliz.braddon@lhpa.org.au)

In the eastern part of the Lachlan LHPA worm tests have mainly come from pre-lambing ewes. The average for this group is 275epg meaning that most ewe mobs will require a drench pre-lambing this year. There have been variable counts though as usual (averages of 24 - 13,636epg!) so it does pay to do the testing on your own farm to be sure. The worm species sneaking about include dominant (e.g. >90% population) Haemonchus (Barber's Pole) in 50% of the larval cultures done. This just goes to show that if you have had trouble with Haemonchus in the previous few months, the cold, frosty weather does not mean you can relax.

This is because the larvae that have managed to survive are still quite happy in these current environmental conditions. More reports of Mectin resistant Haemonchus have been confirmed in the area as well. The other major worm species that is playing a role is Trichostrongylus (Black Scour worm) which is to be expected for this area at this time of year. Best advice for all producers is to worm test, do a drench check 10-14 days after drenching to ensure your drenches are working and do your best to prepare low worm pastures.

Belinda Edmonstone, Forbes (belinda.edmonstone@lhpa.org.au)

In the central area of the Lachlan LHPA average faecal egg counts for the month of June have ranged from 0 - 13636epg with individual counts ranging from 0 - 45600epg. As you can see we are still seeing some very high worm egg counts with Barber's Pole worm being a major contributor.

Producers must think about preparing low-risk paddocks for weaning and lambing.

Katherine Marsh, Condoblin (katharine.marsh@lhpa.org.au)

There have been few worm tests conducted in the past month, but some of those tests that have had worm counts in excess of 1000epg with Barber's Pole worm being the predominant worm type.

Tablelands LHPA

Bill Johnson, Goulburn, (bill.johnson@lhpa.org.au)

About half the worm egg counts from the district contain a significant proportion of Barber's Pole worm (Haemonchus), and a mob of Dorpers picked up enough larvae during winter to cause bottle jaw, weakness and deaths.

While no Haemonchus eggs develop during winter, it is important to know if your sheep are carrying this worm. You could either toss a coin for a fifty-fifty bet, or get a worm egg count and culture done. Action is needed before temperatures rise, and Haemonchus worm eggs resume development.

Like last winter, ewes have already died from pregnancy toxaemia brought on by heavy Scour worm burdens. Further worm problems are anticipated before lamb marking time, unless worm contamination levels in lambing paddocks have been kept low since summer, or effective long-acting drenches were used pre-lambing.

Autopsies of dead ewes may be more reliable than worm egg counts at present, as many worms in lambing ewes are immature.

One unfortunate consequence of producers attempting to avoid a repeat of last year's worm problems has been a rise in the number of deaths from improper administration of slow-release drench capsules. First-time users need time and patience to master the technique. The capsule has penetrated the back of the throat of the dead ewes, and is found lodged high in the neck, outside the oesophagus. Most deaths occur three to seven days after treatment.

Jim McDonald, LHPA DV, Yass (jim.mcdonald@lhpa.org.au)

The Yass District continues to receive very cold and wet weather which will maintain the winter worm species in great shape.

Most ewes have recently or are now receiving their pre-lamb treatments, with many flocks opting for capsule or long acting drench treatments.

Egg counts in ewes prior to treatment have ranged from 100 – 650epg with weaners carrying a greater spread of count depending on recent treatment history.

Continued vigilance through winter/early spring will be needed to keep a lid on worm populations.

Worm testing just prior to lamb marking is recommended to help assess whether treatment at marking is warranted as was the case last year.

Managing the weaners, as always, don't take your eye off them.

Riverina LHPA

Gabe Morrice, Narrandera: (Gabe.Morrice@lhpa.org.au)

So far this month any worm test results I have seen have had very low level FECs.

No clinical cases have been reported.

Colin Peake, Hay; (Colin.Peake@lhpa.org.au)

I have had very few worm test results this month as well. All have been low or zero.

No clinical cases have been reported.

This has been the same for Deniliquin.

We have had good July rain across the Riverina LHPA, which bodes well for spring.

Producers will need to watch their sheep and monitor once the weather starts to warm up.

Hume LHPA

Ian Masters, Gundagai (Ian.Masters@lhpa.org.au)

Scour worms have been the main issue in the Gundagai area. Reinfestation following drenching has resulted in some significant losses in young sheep.

In one case faecal egg counts did not indicate the significant worm burden found on PM. These sheep had been drenched less than one month beforehand but went back onto the same paddock, mainly Ostertagia and Trichs in this case.

Also, there are some very wormy unmarked lambs in this area. Drench resistance is often suspected but in a lot of cases it just comes down to lack of attention in preparing low risk pastures for young sheep in a climate that has been ideal for larval survival.

There are fewer problems in the cropping areas where sheep have been drenched onto crop providing a break in the life cycle.

There should be no shortage of wormy weaners this spring for producers thinking about doing some drench testing. FEC's conducted this month have generally shown a higher trend in this area with the odd differential showing a low level <10% Haemonchus in some of the higher rainfall country. Clinical BPW issues dropped off with the onset of heavy frosts but these counts would indicate some pick up towards the end of autumn. Tony Morton reported variability of counts between and within farms in the Wagga area plus some high variable counts indicating BPW pick up since May.

South East LHPA

Bob Templeton, Braidwood (bob.templeton@lhpa.org.au)

For the districts of Braidwood, Cooma and Bombala, the Barber's Pole worms have finally stopped for the winter. The Black Scour worms have not been so severe but are rising. The last summer saw a dramatic rise in worm resistance to Ivomec, especially around Cooma. Two bouts of extremely heavy frosts have slowed the worms up considerably.

An early spring is assured but Barbers Pole worm is sure to be present in large numbers.

North West LHPA

Plains areas Walgett, Narrabri and Moree – DV Libby Guest

Barber's Pole worm has certainly slowed down in the northwest over winter, with cold temperatures preventing hatching. Producers are advised to consider a strategic drench with an effective product in late September. For many, especially on the plains, this will be a sustained action drench. A follow up worm test 10-14 days after a knock down drench - or 5 weeks after a sustained action drench - is recommended as resistance to commonly used drenches was on the rise in summer and autumn of 2012.

Central West LHPA

Evelyn Walker, LHPA DV, Dubbo (evelyn.walker@lhpa.org.au)

Worm test submissions in our area have quietened down. However, worms are still very active on some properties. The predominant worm type this month appears to be the Black Scour worm on most properties. On some properties, average strongyle egg counts range anywhere from 120epg and up to 2,360epg with the Black Scour worm being 60% and 64% respectively of the worm mix (with Barber's Pole making up the remaining).

During one property investigation, two different mobs of sheep were experiencing losses. One mob of last year's drop were having problems with ill-thrift and scouring but no deaths. The other mob - ewes with lambs at foot - were experiencing deaths in both ewes and lambs at foot. A few of the ewes also displayed signs of bottle jaw. On post mortem examination of two dead ewes, ewes were dehydrated, thin, and blood spots were found along the gastrointestinal tract. One must remember that the Black Scour worms are tiny and very difficult to find on post mortem. When we sent dung away from this particular mob of lactating ewes, the average strongyle worm egg count was 3,040epg! (This was made up of 95% Black Scour worm; 1% Barber's Pole worm; 2% Small Brown Stomach worm and 2% Large Intestinal worm.)

It's important to remember that the Black Scour worm doesn't just cause obvious scours, but if left untreated for too long, affected animals may die from severe dehydration and malabsorption. Having a Black Scour worm burden can destroy the gut lining such that the sheep is no longer able to absorb the nutrients it requires. This leads to weight loss, reduced wool growth, and even lower milk yield in affected animals. On this particular farm, the Black Scour worm proved a deadly combination with lactating ewes barely able to support themselves let alone their lambs at foot. Worm tests are a useful early detection tool to catch an impending worm problem well before you see the physical symptoms of "wormy" looking sheep.

New England LHPA

Andrew Biddle, LHPA DV, Glen Innes (andrew.biddle@lhpa.org.au)

From the Glen Innes/Inverell area of the northern tablelands of NSW, the autumn was not as kind as the season that preceded it. Most classes of livestock are on a falling plane of nutrition unless being supplemented. Recent cold wet days have pushed some ewes over the edge resulting in Ketosis.

Weaners are falling victim to multifactorial ill thrift with the usual suspects involved, Coccidiosis, fluke, Mycoplasma Ovis, Bacterial Enteritis and strongyles.

This week's weather holds the promise of rain in the warmer areas on the west of the tablelands but it is still a long way from spring on the tops.

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