Internal Parasite Management In Sheep

By Ulf Kintzel

Internal parasites are often very poorly managed, may it be by wrong parasite management or by using wrong dewormers or de-worming at the wrong time. In fact, ruthless to do that since you will find that you will have to cull sheep that are otherwise very productive. Get rid of them anyway! It pays in the long run.

Dewormers. Selecting the right dewormer is also very important. The Barber Pole Worm is very often immune to all “white” dewormers (i.e. Safe-Guard, Panacure, Valbazen).

Another very effective but very expensive dewormer against Barber Pole Worm is Cydectin. It is fairly new on the US American market but has been used for years in European countries like Germany. Now there is some worm resistance against Cydectin as well. Since I expect the same resistance to develop over time here in the US I use it very rarely.

TAPEWORM

The second worm to be concerned about is the tapeworm. Adult sheep are immune to the tapeworm but those who aren’t, that is, the adults which are not much bothered by it. But in lambs the tapeworm can cause significant loss of weight and at times also death.

The segments of an adult tapeworm are clearly visible in the manure. It is extremely easy to analyze whether or not lambs are infected. The tapeworm does not respond to any of the “clear” dewormers (Ivomec, Levamisole, Albendazole) but with susceptible worm creates again susceptible worms.

Use dewormers only as needed. With few exceptions there should be no regular schedule for deworming. Anyone who still recommends “clean” in quotation marks since there is no need to take immediate action. I always wait seeing the first signs of an infestation there is no need to take immediate action. I always wait seeing the first signs of an infestation or the diarrhea causes.

To drink the bitter brew because of the dehydration. The treatment has to be done for five consecutive days. Deworming is usually done after the lambing in the spring. This way the worm pressure on the pasture is reduced when it matters the most and when the ewes are the least capable to build immunity.

I also like to deworm the ewes again in the late fall/eary autumn when the grass stops growing and it gets cold, or when I leave my farm and graze the sheep on neighbors’ fields. This way I get the ewes “clean!” and the chance that they get re-infected right away is very low. I put “clean” in quotation marks since there is no such thing as getting sheep actually parasite-free.

The lambs get dewormed for the first time when they are about six weeks old. That is when need it the most. I use Levamisole or, if tapeworms are present, a Levamisole/Valbazen mixture. Usually, the ewes do not get dewormed at that time.

In a dry year I try to wait it out and do not further deworming until the fall. I use Levasole.

A third problem can be coccidiosis. This often occurs in the months of July and August. I put Di-Methox or the like in drinking water. It was recommended to me to add some Jelf-O powder to reduce the bitter taste of it. The treatment has been done for five consecutive days.

Coccidiosis often causes diarrhea and thus dehydrates the affected lambs and sheep. The beauty is that they are the ones who more likely to drink the bitter brew because of the dehydration the diarrhea causes.

Internal Parasite Management

In summary, none of the above described treatments were suggested, no positive strategies to improve education through farm tours and meetings with small farmers. Therefore, the small farmer is in a perfect position to provide animal health care to the ignorant public than the small farmer. These farmers are generally not relived on their results as their main livelihoods, and are often unable to grow and sell as a sideline. They complained that local people drive long distances to buy cheaper products and produce in a big store rather than buy eggs from the local farmer. The benefits of locally grown products. Therefore, the small farmer is in a perfect position to provide animal care to their neighbors.

In some areas, farmers are already spearheading public outreach efforts. I know of two small farmers who hold open houses, and use that time to educate the interested public on their farm. One farm has been doing this for many years, and has quite a number of people coming and seeing many different animals and farming practices, along with very rarely. I wish I could explain to all farmers who have held open two houses, and takes visitors on a tour of the farm. Both farms started these open houses on their own, without prompt-

The “something that must be done!” is that the small farmer must make up his own solution, and not expect anyone else to come to the rescue. Educate your neighbors, and be prosacive. The time waiting for someone else to do something is opportunity lost.

Jean Burr is a grazing specialist with the Soil and Water Conservation District in Onondaga County. She may be reached at 315-677-3851 or jbur@csesd.org.

Something Must Be Done!

By Jean Burr

More than once I have attended an agricultural meeting where farmers voiced how hard it was to sell farm products to local people. These farmers are generally not reliant on their results as their main livelihoods, and are often unable to grow and sell as a sideline. They complained that local people drive long distances to buy cheaper products and produce in a big store rather than buy eggs from the local farmer. The benefits of locally grown products. Therefore, the small farmer is in a perfect position to provide animal care to their neighbors.

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