

Sheep & Beef Talk

May 2019



Lice in Sheep - Why do we get lousy sheep?

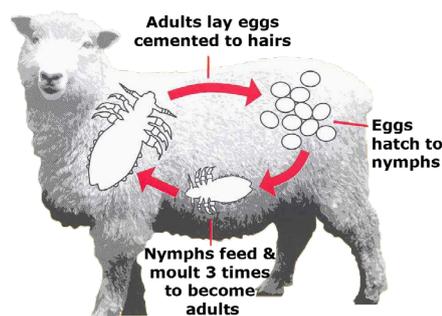
It is very easy to blame the neighbour when you notice that you have lousy sheep, but most commonly the reason is that they were not all removed the last time you treated.

This is because of how lice work:

- Lice cannot jump or fly. They get onto a sheep by crawling from one sheep to another, typically when a mob is in the yards.
- Lice will only survive a few days off a sheep in ideal conditions e.g. on the rails in the woolshed. They will only last a few hours on wool caught on a fence.
- Lice are slow to build up numbers, but females can live for nearly two months. After dipping it can take approximately six months to start finding lice in a mob with careful lice counting.
- Despite having effective chemicals available it

is almost impossible to eradicate lice. If it didn't happen after 140 years of statutory dipping with nasty chemicals and plunge dipping, it is not going to happen now with nicer chemicals and modern application methods. It only takes one adult lice on one sheep to keep the lifecycle going. We are aiming for lice control, not lice eradication.

LIFE CYCLE OF LICE



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- Local News from our VetEnt clinics.

Reminders for May

- Don't forget about facial eczema just yet! We often see clinical cases in May.
- Do a winter feed budget to get an idea of what you might have by lambing time. This year it's important with low feed levels on many farms heading into winter. Contact Will (Te Kuiti) if you want help with this.
- Exit drench for lambs - Zolvix Plus or Startect.
- Check copper levels or supplement if you already know your copper status.
- Tempor for lice on cattle is off the market. Blaze is our recommended product if looking to treat lice only. For young cattle, a combination drench injection such as Boss or Eclipse E should take care of lice as well as worms.
- 5in1 vaccine for beef weaners.
- Lepto vaccinations for cattle.
- Liver fluke drench for cattle. We can do a blood test to check what the fluke challenge has been like to decide if treatment is needed or not.
- Blood test ewes at ram removal for facial eczema to check if any liver damage has occurred. By scanning time it is too late to test

Lice in Sheep (continued)

Why does dipping appear to fail sometimes? There are four reasons you may be seeing lice in your sheep shortly after treatment.

1. The wrong product was used:

Different products have different label claims depending on the length and type of wool. No matter how well you apply a product, if there is too much wool (especially if it is fine wool), the product will not be able to work effectively. To get the best result from your dip, you should treat immediately off-shears. Remember that the IGR's do not kill adult lice, only developing lice as they moult.

2. The product wasn't applied appropriately:

Products must be applied strictly according to label directions. Poor application is the most likely reason for dipping failure, regardless of the method or chemical being used.

With pour-ons we see under-dosing when the assumed weight is wrong; the gun isn't working properly; the wrong gun is being used; or there is reduced coverage due to poor application technique.

With saturation dipping and jetting races we can get under-dosing when the volume required to saturate the sheep is underestimated or not applied when sheep run through too fast or are let out too soon; the volume of the dip sump is wrong;

the mixing rate is wrong; when recycled wash water is used and the chemical is not re-charged; or only the nozzles for fly control are used, meaning the underside of the sheep isn't covered.

3. Treated sheep have been exposed to untreated sheep:

Untreated sheep (including lambs at foot) provide a source of lice and with some pour-on products it can take several weeks for all lice to be killed. You can maximise the effectiveness of the lice programme by:

- Having clean musters;
- Keeping strays out;
- Quarantining newly-purchased sheep;
- Avoiding split-shearing or keeping stock shorn at different times separate from each other;
- Not treating ewes with lambs at foot (unless the lambs are also treated);
- Not treating pregnant ewes within six weeks of lambing; and
- Remember it takes about 4 weeks for any pour-on product to kill all lice.

4. The lice are resistant to the product:

Some lice have the ability to survive dip chemicals. Resistance develops when lice are exposed to a dip and some survivors go on to breed. If we keep using the same chemical or chemical group, these resistant lice will continue to survive and

breed, increasing in numbers until they make up the majority of the population.

Resistance to synthetic pyrethroids has been identified in New Zealand since the 1990's. Resistance to IGR's was confirmed in Australia many years ago and is suspected in New Zealand. Slowing the development of resistance involves obeying the basic principles of lice treatment - Use the right product, at the right time, and apply it correctly, at the right dose rate. Other strategies to prevent resistance include:

- Avoid mixing treated and untreated sheep (including lambs at foot). While there are still protective levels of chemical in the treated sheep this is not an issue (except adult lice when an IGR has been used). However, when chemical levels start to drop in the treated sheep, lice that transfer may be able to survive and go on to breed a more resistant lice population.
- Rotate products from different chemical groups for consecutive treatments. Remember that there may be several different products within a group, so changing product name may not be changing chemical group.
- Use products from different chemical groups for controlling lice and flystrike in the same year if possible.

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Lice in Sheep (continued)

- Avoid using long wool treatments as these do not eradicate lice and may allow resistant ones to survive and breed. If you have used a long wool treatment, use a chemical from a different group after shearing.



If you have any questions or concerns about lice control on your property contact your local VetEnt clinic. Each farm is different so talking through lice control for your property is really important to ensure you are getting the best advice possible.



Local News

King Country

We have wished Hollie Reid farewell and good luck as she heads off on her overseas travels, and have welcomed Theresa Brewer to the support team.

Shane Rix has moved on to new/old adventures and we wish him well for the future. Joining us in May to fill his position as Trading Manager we welcome Libby Wood, who some of you may have encountered as the National Dairy Manager Representative for Farm IQ.

Te Kuiti

We have recently welcomed Stephanie Bowler, our resident nurse and technician. Steph is a qualified vet nurse with a Bachelor's Degree in Veterinary Technology, who started with us a few months back and has really settled in well. Originally from Marton, she is enjoying life in Te Kuiti getting to know the area and our wonderful clients, both on farm and in clinic. Over the summer months she has been busy with spore counting and looks forward to offering a FEC service in clinic soon. If you haven't already met Steph please pop in and say hi next time you are around.

We are also excited to announce that Olivia Buckley is joining VetEnt as our new large animal Vet. Olivia is a local to the community of Te Kuiti and may already be a familiar face to you. We look forward to having her on board.