

## Getting the best from your **Wormtest**

**Wormtest** measures the average number of worm eggs in the dung samples of your stock.

### Why do a **Wormtest**

An integral part of any livestock management plan includes regular monitoring of internal worm levels in stock throughout the year.

Regular worm testing can assist producers to make informed decisions on their drenching programs and on the rotation of stock in the paddocks. Good parasite management strategies can be beneficial in reducing the levels of worms on the pasture as well as reducing the likelihood of drench resistance forming. This will have long term benefits.

As the species of worms change with seasonal conditions, monitoring throughout the year is vital. This is especially important during times when stock are under stress through environmental (e.g. weather/drought) and production factors (e.g. lambing/kidding/calving/markings). Significant numbers of internal parasites can, and do, cause losses in body condition, affecting wool, meat and milk production and can contribute to an increase in the number of stock deaths.

### **Wormtest as a monitor of worm burden**

Monitoring worm burden indicates when to drench and when **not** to drench. Failure to drench when necessary results in production loss, scouring and death. Performing unnecessary drenching increases on-farm costs and **promotes the development of drench resistance**.

### **What type of stock to monitor?**

Any mob/herd suspected of being wormy should be monitored. Young animals are susceptible, especially when weaned. Pregnant and lactating animals are also susceptible. Dry ewes and wethers are fairly immune to worms. Adult goats have poor immunity to worms.

**Monitoring efforts should be concentrated on**

**young sheep, especially weaners, on pregnant ewes and on all classes of goats.**

### **When to monitor?**

While monitoring can take place at any time, most worm problems occur in the wetter months during autumn, winter and spring. Monitoring efforts should be intensified at these times.

If you are unhappy about the condition of your stock or if there is a problem with scouring, a **Wormtest** should be carried out.

**Wormtest** results are usually emailed within two working days of receipt of the samples.

### **Larval Culture**

Further testing can be undertaken to identify the types of worms present in your mob. Larval culture is performed only if the faecal egg count is >200 eggs per gram. If required, this test must be specifically requested on the Advice Note and will incur an extra fee. This process takes approximately 8-10 days.

### **Drench Testing**

The Parasitology laboratory at the Animal Health Laboratory offers clients a Faecal Egg Reduction Test (FECRT) to determine the effectiveness of the different drench class groups. This test is best carried out on mobs of undrenched weaners or animals that have **not been drenched** recently.

If resistance is indicated, a thorough investigation should be performed with the guidance of your veterinary advisor.

For more information on this service contact your veterinarian or

### **Animal Health Laboratory**

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