



## Late Summer Deworming

Dr. J.L. Goelz

Late summer parasite control can be challenging for a number of reasons. First of all pastures are short and overgrazed. This concentrates the worm larva on a smaller surface and increases the likelihood of sheep acquiring more larva. Secondly, summer temperatures and humidity, particularly in southern and eastern areas are ideal for larva survival on pasture. Larva are susceptible to cold and drying. If the pastures are lush with green grass they are probably also lush with larva. Thirdly, the presence of sheep on the pasture “seeds” the pasture with parasite eggs. In most production systems there is no such thing as a “clean” pasture in August. Lastly, controlling parasites in August is important to provide a flushing effect on the ewes prior to breeding.

So what tools do we have available for control? All of the dewormers that are available for worm control in sheep fall into three general categories:

Benzimidazoles (Panacur, Safeguard, Synathic, and Valbazen)

Avermectins (Ivermectin, Dectomax, Cydectin)

Levamisole (Prohibit)

The benzimidazoles class is not very useful in late season deworming. These are “purge” dewormers. They will kill the adult worms but only are effective in the sheep for a few days. In many cases, if these have been used frequently on the farm resistance may be an issue as well.

Avermectins such as Ivermectin and Dectomax can be very useful in late summer. If used in the injectable form they will persist in the blood of sheep and in addition to killing the adult parasites, they will kill any larva consumed for 7-14 days following deworming. Often these are the best options, especially if we are forced to turn sheep back onto an infected pasture.

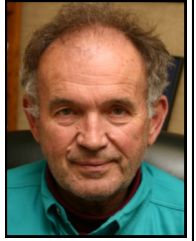
Levamisole, which has been unavailable for the past three years, is becoming more available. We expect our next shipment in early August. This compound has a unique method of action. Furthermore, any resistance that develops disappears when we quit using the dewormer. Since levamisole has not been available in the U.S. for the past three years we anticipate no resistance issues. The only disadvantage is that it is a purge dewormer, similar to the “white dewormers” (the benzimidazole class).

In nearly all cases, fall deworming in conjunction with supplemental grain is highly effective in flushing ewes. This fools the ewe’s physiology into thinking more nutrients are available and thus increasing the rate of multiple births. Flushing works best when ewes are in a thin to moderate condition score.

# Straight Talk

Dr. G.F. Kennedy

Sometimes the world stands still. Not often in my life, but on the way to Alaska to spend time this summer, my world does stand still. Deb, Toby and I will be there until September. I am going to take one break for the Minnesota State Fair in late August.



I will still be in touch with my real job and answering phone sheep questions as well as daily emails. After returning from Sedalia 55-65 degrees will be just fine. Sedalia continues to be a booming success much to the credit of Larry Mead, a real icon in the promotion and development of the purebred sheep industry. I can remember in the early seventies when the entire show and sale was in the sheep barn buying the tallest Suffolk ram in the barn, an Andrus Ram, 32.5 inches.

This year in June I was able to celebrate fifty years in practice, seems like yesterday. The world doesn't stand still, it just moves faster. When you think about it, probably the one thing that stands out is that many of my friends and associates have been around less time than I have practiced.

I have watched our practice grow from three veterinarians, one full time employee and several part time employees to groups of agri-businesses encompassing fifty companies, over 600 employees including fifteen veterinarians. We now manage 140,000 farmer owned sows that produce 3.5 million pigs fed out by farmers in a five state area. Our studs have 1,750 boar spaces with a capacity to produce 30,000 doses of semen a week. I thought it was time to step back from the managing partner position I was in which required me to either make or be involved in every final decision and accept a lower role where I could continue to do the things I enjoy doing and still be a part of a very vibrant business that developed under my leadership.

My duties today involve less financial risk and decision making at a lower level with the aspects of the companies that I enjoy the most. I still am the managing partner of the Pipestone Artificial Breeders companies. I'm very involved with the sheep portion of our practice, back-up person at our auction market, and a substantial amount of swine work, 15,000 sows.

With all the things we do, sheep are the number two enterprise at the Pipestone Vet Clinic, so let's talk a little about sheep. As many of you know I was in the Suffolk business which I exited when our daughters left home. I made a move to a slower track, Rambouillets, owned a Finn ram and some old fashioned Dorsets as well. I have always enjoyed the sheep and in fact probably the purchase of my first Suffolk sheep was enough diversion that it kept me in practice. I had thought about going back to school. We always did a lot of work with sheep in our practice and when the feed lot lambs left there was a conversion to ewe flocks through the Pipestone program and that is about the time I got involved with my own sheep. Actually to find veterinarians that were interested in sheep was difficult. It has gotten better but in some areas it is much the same today. That is one reason we have been successful. We care about sheep, their health, and their owners.

When Kay died, my world did stand still. I dispersed the Rambouillets and got out of the business. Deb and I got married and life was good again. I took her to Sedalia to show her some of my past. There, a friend of mine was judging Dorpers. I got interested and the rest is history.

Dorpers have never been readily accepted in our part of the country and after a fun experience with the sheep, I am exiting the breed. Our attention has turned to Katahdins. For those of you that are laughing, be careful. I may be the guy that laughs last.

Katahdins, a breed that has been ridiculed by many, including me, and does have some sheep that are too small and spindly has a real place in the industry. In the beginning, I referred to them as a sheep in goat's clothing. But Katahdins are a sheep. In fact a very low maintenance breed that offers multiple birth and out of season lambing. Lambs are very vigorous at birth and the ewes are excellent milkers. Our February group weaned a 240% crop with no lambs on the lamb bar.

What may be their biggest asset when it comes to small farm flocks they don't require shearing. With the difficulties involved in shearing and the price of wool this is certainly an asset. It doesn't take a lot of imagination to figure out the tremendous upside with this breed. There are problems as well and sometimes the best thought out strategy can be your worst enemy.

The first problem I would talk about is in order to qualify for their national sale you need to be in the voluntary scrapie program. If we could have gotten rid of scrapie through inspection, we would have never needed a program. Other aspects of the scrapie program are working, animal identification, premise identification, geno typing, quarantine and disposal of susceptible animals in infected flocks.

If you are presently in the voluntary program if you buy a female of less status than your own you revert to the lesser status. This happened to us once. It won't happen again as I exited the program. This has evolved essentially into a 'good ol boys' club barring entry of new people in the breed.

Addition of RR and QR animals will not introduce the disease and the use of RR rams will result in the elimination of susceptible animals.

Then there is NISP and Lamb Plan. Individual breeders may use this as a tool. Mandatory requirement has no value. Polypay breeders arguing over this program have almost destroyed the breed. Our swine breeding company uses EBV's (Estimated Breeding Values) to improve genetics. Thousands of animals are recorded to establish values. This company employs more geneticists than the Ag college system combined. They have yet to convince the producer he should pay thirty cents for \$1.80 return. Problem is, they haven't figured out how to capture a six dollar return over the competitors. That has to happen first. Now you tell me a bunch of sheep farmers got it figured out. I don't think so. I being one of those sheep farmers.

There again, pursue the programs if you see an advantage. But the advantage shouldn't be a bureaucratic way to prevent expansion of the breed.

One guy said, "We don't want to have happen to us what happened to the Suffolks." Did something bad happen to the Suffolks. Last I looked they were doing well in registration numbers and sale value. You can choose what kind of sheep you want to raise but don't turn away interest in your breed by a bunch of meaningless measurements and a bureaucratic disease program.

These comments are meant to be constructive and not mean spirited. I am as excited as I ever have been about any breed of sheep. I see a great future for Katahdin sheep. We should not restrict entry into the breed.

You can check us out at [www.wildernessbeachlodge.com](http://www.wildernessbeachlodge.com) and you can email me at [gkenedy@pipevet.com](mailto:gkenedy@pipevet.com). I answer sheep questions daily regardless of where I am.

Have a great summer. We expect to and I will see some of you at the Minnesota State fair. GO VIKINGS!!

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Veterinary services, procedures, biologicals, and drugs mentioned in this publication represent the personal opinions and clinical observations of the contributing author. They are in no way intended to be interpreted as recommendations without the consent of the producers own practicing Veterinarian. We strongly urge that producers establish a patient-client-veterinarian relationship that allows extra-label use when there are no drugs approved for treatment or if approved drugs are not effective. This procedure allows veterinarians to go beyond label directions when "prudent use" is necessary. The limited availability of drugs and biologics in this country is a major factor in restricting the growth of the sheep industry and allowing producers to compete in the world Market place.

## Question & Answer with Dr. Kennedy

**Question:** I was wondering if you could tell me a way to make my own trace mineralized salt. Mineralized salt for sheep is expensive in my area, and it is not like I can't use it with my flock. I just don't understand why it is getting higher. A 50lb cattle mineral block isn't but \$10 (which I can't use because of the copper content, and since it's hard it is hard on sheep's teeth), but a bag of loose sheep mineral is 25-35 dollars and doesn't last long. If I buy a 50lb bag of salt what other minerals like ca, p, can I mix with it?

**Answer:** I would not feed ca or phosphorus in salt or in commercial mineral mixes. Unless the total ration is considered you can easily get into trouble. Calcium would be less of a problem than phosphorous. Calcium can be supplied by adding it in the form of limestone in concentrated rations. There are some examples on page 21 in our catalog.

**Question:** I have a yearling ewe who started to bleed bright red blood this past Saturday. She has not bled like that since, but she does have an occasional drip of red fluid, which may be urine mixed with it or birthing fluid. She is not distressed and appears to be eating okay. She is due to lamb in about 7-10 days. Any ideas of what may have caused this? Any ideas on care for her?

**Answer:** It could be blood in the urine from broken blood vessels which is probably a non event. Another possibility might be premature discharge of uterine fluid which could be a problem unless perhaps she has already aborted a lamb. Do nothing, would be the best approach right now. If she goes off feed, she should be treated with antibiotics.

**Question:** About 50% of our ewes are chewing up their newborn lambs' tails. In previous years, we would see maybe one or two doing this, but never this many. Are we dealing with a nutritional deficiency of some sort?

**Answer:** if they are on conventional ration long stem hay and grain, I expect not. It is also important they have adequate bedding. Not too much, not too little.

**Question:** What is floppy kid? And what do I look for??

**Answer:** By strictest definition, floppy kid syndrome refers to metabolic acidosis with a high anion gap without dehydration or any known cause in young kids that were normal at birth.

**Question:** I was wondering if you could give sheep too much selenium. I used to buy a 30ppm of selenium but I just recently bought a 90ppm of selenium. Is that too much? What about on lambs?

**Answer:** You probably won't have a problem feeding selenium as long as you are in a reasonable range and in fact have normal levels or are deficient. Injection is a different ball game. You can kill animals immediately by over dosing.

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