MICRON MAN – PTY LTD

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WEC CLIENT SAMPLE PREPARATION

Attention Woolgrower,

Please get chilled faecal samples to Micron Man for testing ASAP. If samples are not kept cold then the eggs will hatch quickly. Cool weather helps to stop hatching, but chilled conditions and not frozen is ideal, for best chance of an accurate result. If the dung samples are completely frozen then the eggs will burst.

We have a small window to get correct results from a sample just taken. Any faecal sample must be refrigerated straight away to prevent eggs from hatching. It is preferred to put the Sample ID on the supplied sticky label and put the label on the specimen vial. All vials must be sealed airtight before transport to the laboratory.

Please contact us before samples are to be sent, to make sure we know they are coming. Use the address below to send samples, as it is the quickest way to come to us.

MICRON MAN PTY LTD
PO BOX 1423
BIBRA LAKE WA 6965

Alternatively samples can be delivered in person. Make sure the supplied freezer packs are frozen to keep samples chilled for transport. If samples are sent to our Factory street address then there will be a delayed delivery time. Micron Man provides the WEC test for $4+GST per test.

Please contact if any queries,

Regards,

Wayne Marshall

GUIDE TO WORM EGG COUNT RESULTS

Worm Egg Counts (WEC) can be one of the most useful management tools a livestock producer can utilise. The results are expressed as "eggs per gram" (epg) of dung, and split between the roundworm species of Strongyle and Nematodirus eggs as observed. Strongyle eggs detected may be the Brown Stomach worm or Barbers Pole worm, as the eggs look similar and have the same egg size.

RESULTS BREAKDOWN FOR SHEEP, ALPACAS AND GOATS

<200 epg	-	Drench probably not required.
>200 to 500 epg	-	Seek advice.
>500 epg	-	Drench probably required

It is very difficult to give hard and fast rules on interpreting egg counts, as there are so many variables to consider. These include :-

Age of animals

Adult dry animals in good condition tolerate worms much better than young or poor animals.

Nutritional Condition

Well nourished animals develop stronger immunity to worms faster and so withstand a worm challenge better than poorer animals. Sometimes moving animals onto a better paddock is as good as a drench.

Physiological Condition

Are these animals young and growing, pregnant or rearing young? All factors that can place added stress on their systems and render them more susceptible to worm infestations. Young animals, such as weaners, are an important group to sample because they tend to be quite vulnerable to worms.

Looking to the future

A decision to drench or not, based on a worm egg count (WEC), may also be influenced by how wormy pastures are likely to get in the coming weeks and months. If you have a low to medium WEC and have the option of moving the mob to cleaner fresh pasture, then drenching may not be required.

Management Factors

If animals are to be mustered for some other reason, you may decide to drench based on WEC as well as convenience. The WEC along with the other factors listed gives you the power to make an informed decision.

TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE SHEEP WORM CONTROL

from John Karlsson, DAFWA Manjimup

Although sustainable worm control should involve both improvement in the sheep resistance to the worms as well as minimising selection for drench resistance, this article will only focus on the latter.

In general it can be argued that the current worm control practices are not sustainable in the long term. One of the measurements of lack of sustainability of worm control is the increase in worms becoming resistant to the active chemical of the different generic drench groups. In the case of WA, this has been recognised since the early 1980's based on an increase in resistance to the then common `white' and `clear' broad spectrum drench groups. We now recognise that unfortunately when we drench to have the greatest impact on the worm population, we also impose the greatest selection in favour of the resistant genes in the worms. One of the classical examples of this is the old practice of `Summer Drenching'.

To reduce the selection for drench resistance on a farm you need to reduce unnecessary drenching. This can only be managed by monitoring individual mobs. This is important as there will be differences between age groups of sheep as well as paddock and seasonal differences.

Monitoring of worm burdens in the sheep in a flock situation is done in an indirect manner by conducting a worm egg count (WEC) as a measure of adult female worms. The result is expressed as eggs per gram (epg) of faeces. From past experience we can use the WEC average (10 or more samples) of a mob to determine if the resident worm burden requires control.

In general, not enough WEC based worm control is practised. There are WEC providers available in WA, but not always close by. There are always several reasons (excuses) given for not having a WEC based monitoring system on a farm, including inconvenience and lack of ready access etc.

If more detail is required then contact John Karlsson :-

Phone : (08)97770000 or Email : john.karlsson@agric.wa.gov.au