



Worm Control in Beef Herds

Assoc. Prof. Bruce Allworth

Fred Morley Centre

CSU



Summary

- Young cattle most at risk
- Autumn, late winter / spring peak challenges
- *Ostertagia* main issue
- Worm Faecal Egg counts limited
- Drench resistance?





Cattle worms

- ***Ostertagia ostertagi*** (small brown stomach worm)
 - Main problem, Type I and Type II
- ***Cooperia oncophora*** (intestinal worm)
 - High egg producer, often present, mainly a problem if *Ostertagia* already a problem
- ***Trichostrongylus axei*** (stomach hair worm)
 - Can cause problems with sheep
- (*Haemonchus placei*)



The Life Cycle

- Potentially rapid but almost always SLOW
- Female worms lay eggs
- Hatch /larval development in dung pats
- Migrate on pasture / eaten
- Develop in 4th stomach – 3 weeks??
- Weather main influence



Life cycle (continued)

- Young cattle highest egg counts
- Adult cattle quite immune
- Hatching takes
 - 4-12 days in summer
 - 5-10 weeks in winter
- Dung pats must dry out / outer area develop first, long delays



Peak risk times

- 6-8 weeks after autumn break
- Large numbers of larvae mid autumn-mid spring
- Low numbers mid spring-mid autumn
- BUT over-summering as arrested larvae (L4's)
- Larvae survive well in dung pat





Types of Ostertagia

- Type I
 - typical winter /spring problem
 - Poor growth rates + scouring in most young animals
- Type II
 - Larvae inhibit from mid August on
 - Resume around autumn break
 - Severe weight loss in few animals



Cost of worms

Data from CT LHPA



Control measures

- Depends on time of calving
- Young animals
- Drench to improve weight gains
- Watch Type 2



Timing

Autumn calving

- Heifers pre-calving a real risk- Drench Jan
- Weaning drench, depends on marketing
- Winter drenches for carryover calves

Spring Calving

- Weaning drench and winter drenches



Monitoring

- WFECs
 - Limited, useful if a problem
 - Hard to be proactive
- Pepsinogen ?
- Think about weather, pasture availability, conditions



Drench Resistance

- Limited report, difficult to assess
- Is occurring
- Watch practices
- Test pre / post drenching
- Depends of drug profile, not longevity



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