

Sheep Scab Checklist



Sheep scab became notifiable to the Divisional Veterinary Manager of Animal Health under the Sheep Scab (Scotland) Order 2010. The disease seriously affects the welfare of sheep and has a significant financial impact through its effects on the condition of ewes, the growth rate of lambs, damage to wool and reduced quality of sheepskins. Scab mites feeding on the skin surface cause intense irritation to the sheep that results in them rubbing and scratching. The disease is more common in the winter and spring when the sheep have full fleeces. In the autumn/early winter, flock owners should assess their flock's scab status and treat accordingly. Whenever possible flock owners should co-ordinate any treatment or control measures with their neighbours to gain maximum benefit from their time and effort.

When assessing scab status you should consider:-

1. Is there evidence of scab?
2. Were ALL introduced sheep treated for scab and held in quarantine for three weeks?
3. Are boundaries secure and sheep proof? Remember scab can spread directly across a fence from sheep to sheep and from tags of wool left on fences.
4. Are neighbouring flocks infected or at risk of infection?

Notes:

1. When an owner or keeper suspects their sheep are affected by sheep scab they **must** inform the Divisional Veterinary Manager of the local Animal Health Office.
2. The manufacturers of the dips containing high-cis-cypermethrin voluntarily withdrew all these products from the market in early 2010
3. During 2010 the withdrawal period for dips containing Diazinon was extended to 70 days
4. Ask your vet for further advice on whether to treat and the appropriate product to use. This checklist is intended for guidance.

Scab Control Checklist

Sheep Scab – The Disease

Sheep scab is the most contagious disease of sheep in Britain today. Mites will survive off the sheep for up to 16 days. Although transmission is usually sheep to sheep; transporters, fence posts used for rubbing, bushes, trees and contaminated clothes and equipment can all be a source of infection.

Scab Control

- Assess the risk of sheep scab affecting your flock with your veterinary surgeon.
- If appropriate, treat all sheep on your farm in the spring with a product approved for scab i.e. dip or injectables. This is best done when all the sheep can be readily gathered.
- Co-operate with your neighbours so that all flocks are treated within a period of two to three weeks.
- Maintain effective fencing.
- Do NOT use pour-ons, jettors or showers to control or treat scab. They are ineffective.

Sheep Moved Onto The Farm

- i. e. bought-in sheep (including rams)
 - sheep returned from market or summer grazing
 - sheep going to away-wintering
 - sheep moving on for wintering
 - sheep returning from away-wintering stragglers
- Assume all sheep arriving on your farm could be infected with sheep scab
- Check fences and gates before sheep are unloaded
- Dip with a scab approved dip or inject with one of the injectables
- Do not mix with the main flock until two weeks after full treatment has been completed

Remember it is not just sheep moved onto the farm which can be carrying sheep scab mites. Any container used to transport sheep e.g. trailers, wagons, and any equipment used by contractors and shearers presents a risk for the spread of scab unless they are fully cleaned and disinfected prior to use.

In The Event Of An Outbreak

- In Scotland notify the local Divisional Veterinary Manager.
- Confirm the diagnosis through your vet and local SAC/VLA Veterinary Centre since other skin parasites can mimic "scab"
- Warn neighbours and tell them when you will be treating
- Alert the suspected source of infection
- Treat all sheep that could possibly have come into contact with affected sheep or their fields
- Strictly adhere to the product requirements for treatment.
- If using short-acting injections, move sheep to a clean area after first treatment, avoid contact with untreated, uninfected sheep for 7-14 days depending upon product used.
- If it is possible that some sheep have been missed, repeat the treatment.

Table 1 Scab treatment and control

Dips with long lasting protection. They kill mites and provide approximately four weeks protection from a single dipping. (Allow 14+ days between dipping and dosing with any drench containing levamisole.)

Group	Chemical	Trade Name	Marketed by:-	Meat withdrawal period (days)
organophosphate	diazinon	Paracide 62*	Animax Ltd	70
	diazinon	Osmonds Gold Fleece**	Cross Vetpharm Group Ltd.	70

Injection for prevention & treatment of scab.

Cyductin/Zermex (moxidectin) 2% LA – A single injection only is required for treatment and has 60 days persistence for prevention of reinfection.

Cyductin/Zermex (moxidectin) 1% - Two subcutaneous injections 10 days apart are required for treatment. A single subcutaneous injection provides protection against re-infection for 28 days. Treated, infected sheep must not be mixed with untreated, uninfected sheep for 14 days.

Group	Chemical	Trade Name	Marketed by:-	Meat withdrawal period (days)
milbemycin 1%	moxidectin 1%	Cyductin 1%	Pfizer	70
		Zermex 1%	Pfizer	70
milbemycin 2%	moxidectin 2%	Cyductin 2%LA	Pfizer	104
		Zermex 2%LA	Pfizer	104

Injections for treatment & control of scab.

- One intramuscular injection of Dectomax (doramectin) is required. Treated, infected sheep must not be mixed with untreated, uninfected sheep for 14 days.
- Two subcutaneous injections of an ivermectin, seven days apart are required. Then only mix with untreated, uninfected sheep after a further seven days

Group	Chemical	Trade Name	Marketed by:-	Meat withdrawal period (days)
avermectin	doramectin	Dectomax Soln. for Injection	Elanco	63 days
avermectin	ivermectin	Noromectin & Paramectin	Norbrook	42 days after 2 nd injection
		Qualimectin Soln. for Injection	Janssen	42 days after 2 nd injection
	ivermectin	Virbamec Injection	Virbac	42 days after 2 nd injection
	ivermectin	Ivomec Classic Injection & Panomec	Merial	37 days after 2 nd injection

Notes:

* Paracide 62 is dispensed through a pump provided by the supplier.

** Osmonds Gold Fleece is dispensed using a special dispenser with a hand pump.

This checklist is intended for guidance only. Always check the datasheet before using any veterinary medical product.

Prepared by SAC Consulting: Veterinary Services and funded by the Scottish Government as part of the Animal Welfare Advisory Activity. For Further information contact your local Disease Surveillance Centre or visit www.sac.co.uk.

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