

## Unit 20i: Dosing Factsheet

### Introduction

Cattle and sheep need to be dosed (drenched) for a variety of reasons. The dose can be preventative, curative or palliative (making them feel better). The correct technique is essential to avoid:

- i. Possible infection due to damage to the back of the throat
- ii. Inhalation pneumonia (fluid in lungs).

### Types of doses

- Anthelmintic /wormers
- Antibiotics in solution e.g. scours tablets to calves
- Minerals - trace elements
- Oral electrolyte solution
- Curative e.g. for bloat or acidosis

The main type of dose used on UK farms is the anthelmintics. These treat and prevent internal parasites.

### Anthelmintics or wormers

All wormers now belong to one of three wormer families:

- The benzimidazoles (white wormers)
- The levamisoles (yellow wormers)
- The macrocyclic lactone (the mectin family - dose or injection).

### Guidelines on dosing

- Know the weight of the animal being dosed
- Use the correct wormer
- Only dose if there is a worm burden
- Check that the dosing gun is delivering the required dose
- Dose into the oesophagus and not into the mouth so that the wormer goes into the rumen and not directly into the abomasum or true stomach
- Restrict feeding around dosing
- Withholding food for 24 hours around dosing can increase the activity of BZ and ML wormers - more effective kill
- Monitor faecal egg counts to optimise the timing of wormer use and its killing effect.

### SCOPS (sustainable control of parasites in sheep)

SCOPS initiative (co-ordinated by HCC in Wales) produces technical advice on appropriate anthelmintics, quarantine drenching, faecal egg counting (FEC) and grazing management. The aim is to persuade farmers to change their worming practices to slow the rate of resistance build-up.