

Interested in knowing more about your flock's parasite status?

Looking for volunteer flocks in Saskatchewan!

Background: Over recent years, researchers at the University of Calgary (Drs. Michel Levy and John Gilleard) and the Western College of Veterinary Medicine in Saskatoon (Dr. Fabienne Uehlinger) have assessed the level of internal parasites and anthelmintic efficacy in Alberta and Saskatchewan sheep flocks. Results suggest that many Saskatchewan and Alberta sheep flocks have high parasite burdens and that deworming protocols are frequently ineffective. Last year in Saskatchewan, 4/5 flocks in which we assessed anthelmintic resistance with a fecal egg count reduction test had resistance against fenbendazole and/or ivermectin and producer-conducted treatments failed to sufficiently reduce fecal egg counts post-treatment in 4/6 flocks. This year, we are able to continue the study, thanks to the assistance of the Alberta Meat and Livestock Agency (ALMA) and the University of Saskatchewan but need your help in making it happen!

Who can participate? You should have at least **20 or more ewes** that have not been dewormed for at least 8 weeks prior to participating in our study.

How: If you're interested, we will ask you to conduct an on-farm deworming assessment (OFDA). Fecal sampling kits will be mailed to you. Fecal samples should be collected from about 20 ewes pre- and again 14 days post-deworming with a product of your choice. Ideally, this will take place 5-6 weeks after the flock has been onto pasture. Fecal samples will be sent by pre-paid courier to the laboratory at the University of Calgary for analyses. If your farm is suitable for a controlled assessment of the efficacy of different deworming drugs through a fecal egg count reduction test, we may be interested in visiting your farm specifically to conduct that part of the project (time permitting). Special arrangements for this part of the project would have to be made.

Benefit to you: You will receive free information about the level of internal parasite burden in your flock and whether your deworming protocol was effective. With your consent, your flock's results will also be shared with your regular veterinarian. We will also determine the most common parasite types present in your flock. This will give us and you more detailed information about the specific efficacy of your deworming product and protocol used.

The ability to monitor different flocks, parasite burdens and deworming efficacy over several years in Saskatchewan and other parts of western Canada helps us to get solid information on which to base parasite management recommendations not just for you but for the entire industry. This is important to try and maintain efficacy of current deworming drugs and to help the industry remain sustainable.

We are happy to hear from past participants as well as new participants!

If you are interested in taking part in this research project this year, please contact the study coordinator, Courtney Orsen, at the University of Saskatchewan.

Thank you for your help and interest in this project.
Courtney Orsen: sheep.parasites@usask.ca or phone: 1-306-966-5480