

Successful Sheep Production and Breeding Guide

BREEDING

LAMBING

PRODUCTION



Guidelines for **Successful** and **Profitable** Sheep Production Systems

ENZOOTIC ABORTION (EAE)

What causes Enzootic Abortion (EAE)?

It is caused by a bacteria called *Chlamydophila abortus*.

EAE cost to the industry = €16 million per year

An initial outbreak of *C. abortus* within a flock can lead to **30% or more of ewes aborting or giving birth to stillborn or weak lambs** the following year.

The incidence remains at around 5-10% in further lambing seasons if control measures are not implemented.

The disease is also a zoonosis and can cause:

- Abortion in women
- Flu-like symptoms in both children and adults

EAE Control

Vaccination will effectively aid in the control of EAE within your flock.

As latently infected ewes cannot be identified prior to abortion any ewe may pose a threat of infection to another. It is best to vaccinate the entire flock in the first year. Thereafter, vaccinate all replacements, regardless of source.

Generally, only one vaccination is needed for the lifetime of the ewe. However, the licensed duration of protection is for at least three years post vaccination.

In any infected flock, a proportion of ewes may already be latently infected. Some of these ewes may still abort at the first lambing, because the infection is already established, however vaccination has been shown to reduce the number of abortions in these ewes.

**2%
TARGET**

The target is to achieve losses of less than 2% due to abortion and infertility.

REMEMBER! Infection picked up in one season will result in abortion the next lambing season.

Where does it come from?

Latently infected ewes or lambs



Bought-in replacements is the usual source of disease initially on farm

Transmission from ewe to ewe



Infection passes from ewe to ewe via infected afterbirth and vaginal discharges for approximately 2 weeks post lambing

Wildlife

Carrying of infected afterbirth from one farm to another



New born lambs



Lambs can be born already infected from mothers carrying the disease

Vaccination with Enzovax

- In the first year of a vaccination programme, all breeding females should be vaccinated at least 4 weeks before mating
- In subsequent years, any breeding females joining the flock should be vaccinated
- Immunity lasts for at least 3 years
- Enzovax and Toxovax can be administered on the same day, at different sites



ABORTION

Successful Sheep Production and Breeding Guide

TOXOPLASMOSIS

How does a flock become infected?

Toxoplasma gondii is a protozoan parasite. Mice are an intermediate host in the life cycle and act as a source of infection for the cat. Sheep pick up the infection from contaminated cat faeces in barns, feed stores, bedding, manure or directly from pasture. Eggs are shed for approximately one week in cat faeces before the cat becomes immune, the cat is then no longer a source of infection. Eggs can survive for well over a year in the environment.

Whose flock is at risk?

Toxoplasma gondii is an environmental contaminant so all flocks are at risk. Young wild cats are the most likely candidates to be infected.

Effects

Barrenness

Abortions

Resorption

Mummified fetuses

Stillbirths

Weak lambs

Heavy infections, typically in small groups, can cause infertility in 50% or more of the ewes. Normally it's a grumbling problem, reducing the number of lambs by around 6%. It is also a zoonotic risk especially to pregnant women and immunosuppressed individuals.

Can I control it through management?

The only way to effectively control toxoplasmosis is through vaccination. Feeding a coccidiostat can be of benefit but, as toxoplasmosis can strike at any time, medication should be fed throughout pregnancy and can therefore be financially prohibitive.



A **single cat dropping** can contain enough eggs to **infect more than 100 ewes.**



Vaccination with Toxovax

- In the first year of a vaccination programme, all breeding females should be vaccinated at least 3 weeks before mating
- In subsequent years, any breeding females joining the flock should be vaccinated
- Immunity lasts for at least 2 years, it is likely that within this time natural exposure will boost immunity. However for complete protection from vaccination revaccinate after 2 years



Only Heptavac[®]-P *plus* protects against Clostridia and *Pasteurella**



Footvax[®] contains *Dichelobacter nodosus* serotype I, H, G, F, E, D, C, B₂, B₁, A.

Withdrawal periods: Meat and offal: Zero days, Milk: Not authorised for use in animals producing milk for human consumption.

Legal Categories: ROI: **POM NI: POM-VPS**

Enzovax[®] contains Live, attenuated strain ts1B *Chlamydophila abortus*. Withdrawal periods: Meat and offal: 7 days. Legal Categories: ROI: **POM NI: POM-V**

Toxovax[®] contains $\geq 10^5$ *Toxoplasma gondii* tachyzoites S48. Withdrawal periods: Meat and offal: 42 days. Legal Categories: ROI: **POM NI: POM-V**

Heptavac[®]-P Plus contains *Clostridium perfringens* beta toxoid, *Clostridium perfringens* epsilon toxoid, *Clostridium septicum* toxoid, *Clostridium tetani* toxoid, *Clostridium novyi* toxoid, inactivated *Clostridium chauvoei*, inactivated *Mannheimia haemolytica* A1, A2, A6, A7, A9, inactivated *Pasteurella trehalosi* T3, T4, T10, T15. Withdrawal periods: Zero days. Legal Categories: ROI: **LR NI: POM-VPS**

**M. haemolytica* and *B. trehalosi*

Use medicines responsibly

Prescription decisions are for the person issuing the prescription alone.

Please refer to the product SPC and packaging leaflets for information about side effects, precautions, warnings and contraindications. For further information contact: MSD Animal Health, Red Oak North, South County Business Park, Leopardstown, Dublin 18, Ireland.

Tel: +353(0)1 2970220. Email: vet-support.ie@msd.com

Web: www.msd-animal-health.ie