

Fact sheet 1. **Effects of worms**

wormwise

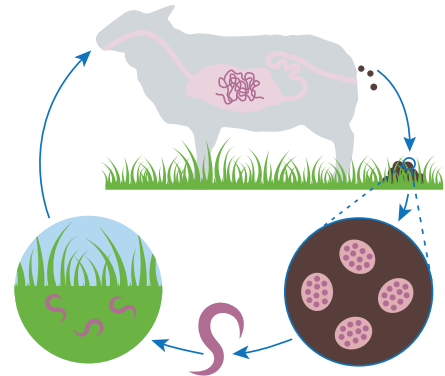
national worm management strategy



The impact of worms (internal parasites) on animal production begins as soon as animals are exposed to worm larvae on pasture.

These effects may be viewed as a continuum from no exposure to worms, and therefore no impact, to the presence of heavy burdens in animals leading to disease and even death.

Physical signs represent the end stage of a complex and progressive disease process. Their appearance represents failure of worm management strategies.



No worm exposure
No effect

Heavy worm burdens
Disease and death

Subclinical effect

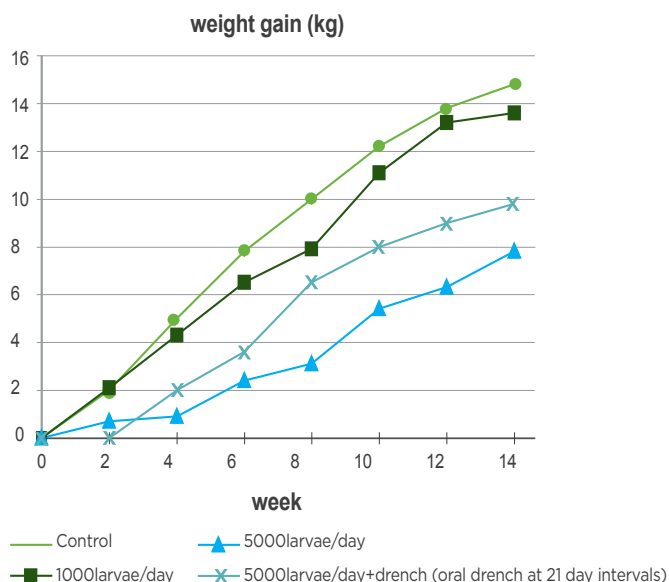
Clinical effect

PRODUCTION

LOSS

This diagram illustrates that long before clinical (visible) signs of worm infection occurs, there can be significant production loss.

Effect of daily intake of *Ostertagia* larvae and anthelmintic on growth of young lambs (adapted from Coop *et al* 1982)



Larval challenge occurs whenever animals graze pasture contaminated with infective L3 larvae.

Infection reduces appetite as well as demanding an immune response with losses directly proportional to the level of parasite infection.

No drench can completely eliminate the effects of larval challenge.

Production loss due to worms is of greatest importance in young stock.

Young animals are born with no immunity to worms and are a major source of pasture contamination until immunity is developed.



Successful worm management strategies should aim to minimise larval challenge at critical points in your farming operation.