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Department of Agriculture, Western Australia

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INSECTICIDES FOR EXTERNAL PARASITES OF SHEEP AND CATTLE

CHLORINATED hydrocarbon insecticides for the control of external parasites of sheep and cattle are no longer registered under the Veterinary Medicines Act. The preparations are D.D.T., B.H.C., dieldrin, aldrin and toxaphene.

D.D.T. is the only exception to this rule; it may still be used in blowfly dressings.

Despite the ban on these insecticides external parasites can still be effectively controlled. Recommended alternative insecticides and their use for controlling external parasites are given below.

FOR SHEEP

Arsenic

About 90 per cent. of all sheep dipping compounds now used are arsenical preparations.

It has been shown that a single thorough dipping in an arsenical fluid will completely eradicate lice.

Arsenic will not eradicate itch mite; it will however suppress the infestation to a level where it produces no ill-effects.

Arsenic has little residual toxicity and when used alone is not effective for the eradication of keds.

An arsenic-rotenone preparation however has been found satisfactory for controlling sheep keds, or so called, tick. The preparation has a good residual toxicity and will destroy young keds emerging from the pupae.

Organic Phosphorus Compounds

Some of the organic phosphorus compounds are diazinon, delnav (bercotox), asuntol and malathion.

These compounds are highly effective for the eradication of lice but are not effective against itch mite. Organic phosphorus compounds can be recommended (for the control of lice and keds) in the warmer districts north and east of Perth where itch mite does not occur, or is not a problem.

Organic phosphorus compounds will control sheep keds where they occur to a limited extent in the higher rainfall areas.

These compounds are also successful in preventing blowfly strike. They have a prolonged residual toxicity and make a serviceable blowfly dressing. When these are applied by jetting protection lasts for about three months.

Lime-Sulphur

Lime-sulphur is the only insecticide capable of eradicating itch mite. However it is not effective against lice or keds, and is costly and unpleasant to use.

Because of this, and the need for a follow up dipping to control these two parasites, lime-sulphur is unlikely to find favour with flock owners.

Rotenone-piperonyl butoxide

This has given encouraging results but the combination has yet to be proved in the field.

FOR CATTLE

The only important external parasites of cattle in the southern areas of the State are biting lice and sucking lice. Both may be eradicated by spraying with an organic phosphorus compound in accordance with the manufacturers' directions.

Two treatments separated by a 14-day interval are necessary for complete eradication of biting and sucking lice on cattle.

FOR PIGS

The ban on chlorinated hydrocarbon preparations has not been extended to the control of lice and mange on pigs. Any of these preparations may be used on pigs for this purpose.

D.D.T.

Blowfly dressings containing D.D.T., which has a good residual toxicity and protects sheep against re-strike may still be used. This is the only exception to the ban on chlorinated hydrocarbon preparations for the control of external parasites of sheep and cattle.
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