

WORMING PROGRAMME FOR SHEEP MEASLES PROTECTION:

The Vet Centre Marlborough co-ordinates a worming programme for both working dogs and companion animals. The working dog programme is aimed at controlling Sheep Measles on the farm. These are small cysts found in the meat of infected sheep and goats. Cysts are not a human health risk; however they are considered a quality defect in the meat, in both local and overseas markets.

The Life Cycle:

Sheep become infected with the cysts by ingesting tapeworm eggs from the pasture, causing cysts to develop in any muscle tissue. Dogs then become infected by eating raw sheep/goat meat or offal which contains the cyst. From then it takes approximately 4-5 weeks for the adult tapeworm (*Taenia Ovis*) to develop in the intestine. A dog can carry several tapeworms and a mature tapeworm is able to produce up to 250 000 eggs per day! The dog then infects the pasture by shedding eggs in the faeces, and the life cycle begins again.

Breaking The Life Cycle:

Worming working dogs monthly helps break the life cycle of the tapeworm. We use Vetcare Tapeworm tablets which are effective in killing the adult tapeworms in the dog's intestine. If the dog then eats cyst-affected meat, it takes at least one month for an adult tapeworm to develop to the stage of producing more eggs. Therefore it is important to worm your dogs on a strict dosing schedule of once a month, to ensure they are free of tapeworm. It is also recommended to dose any new dogs entering your property with a suitable wormer at least 48 hours prior to their arrival. Both working dogs and companion animals (cats and pet dogs) should be treated with an all-wormer at least four times per year (every 3 months). An all-wormer treats the other three worms which can also affect dogs – roundworm, hookworm and whipworm, as well as also treating tapeworm. We recommend Drontal All-wormer, as a broad spectrum worming tablet.

Other ways to break the life cycle of the tapeworm:

- Any home killing of sheep or goats should take place in a dog proof enclosure. Offal and dead stock disposal sites must also be in areas away from dogs.
- Before feeding sheep or goat meat to dogs, the meat should either have been cooked or frozen.
- **COOKING** – the meat should be heated to a core temperature of 72 degrees Celsius and cooked throughout to ensure the cysts are killed (this should take place in a dog proof area). As a general rule, all the meat should turn brown. Any tinges of red suggest insufficient cooking.
- **FREEZING** – meat should be frozen to a core temperature of -10 degrees Celsius (or colder) for at least 7 days. The dog food should be clearly labelled and dated to allow easy identification. Check the freezer temperature regularly to ensure it is operating at the required temperature.
- Feed alternative foods eg. dry food, biscuits or dog roll.
- Keep all dogs under control at all times to prevent scavenging.

The Worming Programme Protocol:

Once enrolled on the worming programme you will receive a monthly dosing schedule and the required tablets for each dog. The tablets are posted at the beginning of the month, in order for them to be given on the 15th of the month – this allows a regular dosing programme to be in place. To enrol your dogs on the worming programme or for further information, please contact Maree on 577 9822 or surgery@vetmarlborough.co.nz