

Control fluke to maximise performance

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Fluke are present on many beef farms. Animals do not acquire resistance, so you need to consider dosing. Fluke have three different life stages and there are six active ingredients that kill them. Each active ingredient kills at different stages in the life cycle; therefore, control is complicated. Looking at **Table 1**, if I house my

cattle today and dose them in two weeks with a triclabendazole product, I will kill all the fluke in the animal; however, if I use a clorsulon product, I will only kill the adults, i.e., fluke larvae that were ingested over 10-12 weeks ago. The younger larvae will still be alive and burrowing through the liver.

Table 1: Flukicide efficacy chart for cattle.

Life stage	Weeks from ingestion	Active ingredient	Brand name
Early immature, immature and adult	Two to five weeks	Triclabendazole (oral)	Fasinex, Endofluke, Tribex
Immature and adult	Six to nine weeks	Closantel	Closamectin, Flukiver
Adult only	10 to 12 weeks	Albendazole Rafoxanide Clorsulon Oxyclozanide	Albex 10%, Endospec 10% Ridafluke, Curafluke Bimectin Plus, Ivomec Super, Animec Super Levafas Diamond, Zanil

Another complication is that there are reports of resistance to triclabendazole. To avoid this, I could use a closantel product at housing to kill the adults and immature fluke and come back and treat again in six weeks to get the early immatures.

Fluke treatment is farm specific, so think about

your farm. Is it dry or wet? Look at the beef health check reports on the Irish Cattle Breeding Federation (ICBF) website and talk to your advisor or vet. If slaughtering animals, check the withdrawal dates – some are lengthy. To ensure your dosing worked, take a faecal egg sample at Christmas.

RESEARCH UPDATE



Supplements to silage

M. MCGEE, R. KENNEDY, E.G. O'RIORDAN and A.P. MOLONEY of Teagasc Grange report on barley- or maize meal-based rations containing flaked peas, flaked beans or maize by-products as supplements to grass silage for finishing beef cattle.

The intake, growth and carcass traits of late-maturing suckler steers (initial liveweight – 575kg) offered grass silage supplemented with barley- and maize meal-based rations containing flaked peas, flaked beans, maize dried distillers' grains, or maize gluten feed for 110 days, were examined. Animals were accommodated in a slatted-floor shed and individually offered grass silage (dry matter digestibility, 779g/kg; crude protein – 110g/kg dry matter) *ad libitum* plus 4.0kg dry matter daily (in two feeds) of one of eight concentrate supplements formulated to have the same crude protein concentration (141g/kg dry matter): 1. rolled barley (622g/kg fresh weight basis) plus flaked peas (300g/kg); 2. rolled barley (722g/kg) plus flaked beans (200g/kg); 3. rolled barley (637g/kg) plus maize gluten feed (285g/kg);

4. rolled barley (780g/kg) plus maize dried distillers' grains (142g/kg); 5. maize meal (507g/kg) plus flaked peas (415g/kg); 6. maize meal (622g/kg) plus flaked beans (300g/kg); 7. maize meal (522g/kg) plus maize gluten feed (400g/kg); or, 8. maize meal (702g/kg) plus maize dried distillers' grains (220g/kg). All concentrates contained 50g/kg molasses and were balanced for minerals/vitamins. Intake, growth, carcass weight, and carcass conformation and fat score did not differ significantly between the cereal types or protein sources. Under the conditions of this experiment, the feeding value of maize meal was equal to barley, and flaked beans or peas were equivalent to maize gluten feed or maize dried distillers' grains.

TB testing changes

The introduction of the EU's Animal Health Law on April 21, 2021 aims to prevent and control disease that can be transmitted to other animals and humans, and it brings a change to TB testing requirements in Ireland. It will be introduced in two phases. Phase one will begin on February 1, 2023, and no date has yet been set for the introduction of phase two.

So, what are the new testing requirements of phase one? Cows of all ages, and males over the age of 36 months, moving farm to farm, or through a mart, must be TB tested in the previous six months. They must also be moving from a herd that has been TB tested in the previous six months. If the animal does not meet these

requirements, it can be tested 30 days before movement or 30 days after movement. If it requires a test after movement, it will be restricted to the receiving herd and it must be tested within 30 days. If it is not tested within 30 days then the whole herd will be restricted, following which the herd will be scheduled for a test after another 30 days. The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM) will notify farmers with animals requiring a post-movement test. Farmers either selling or buying animals can time their annual test to coincide with the sale or purchase of animals by contacting their DAFM regional veterinary office. For further information log on to www.bovinetb.ie.

On low K index soils, apply 50% Muriate of Potash when closing up paddocks



Review your parasite control plan for liver fluke going into the housing period



Order your protected urea for 2023



Continue to spread lime where conditions allow



Soil sample your farm



Test your silage



Slurry and manure study

Farmers know the value of manure and slurry as organic fertilisers; however, there are numerous other commercially valuable uses for these materials, including: composting; conversion into biogas using anaerobic digestion; as a fuel for combustion; filler for cement mortars; and, processing for feed, etc. Teagasc is seeking 30 beef, dairy, pig, sheep and broiler farmers to participate in a study

that will analyse the composition of animal slurry and manure, and assess their suitability for a range of uses with and without pre treatment.

All results will be anonymised and each farmer will receive his/her results free. To express an interest, please fill the online form (name, farm type and email) using the following link: www.teagasc.ie/animalwastes.

HEALTH & SAFETY



Over 4,500 farm accidents occur annually

Research from the Teagasc National Farm Survey (NFS) has revealed that there were 4,523 accidents on Irish farms during 2020. The data shows over 88% of these accidents involved the farm operator, with a further 11% relating to family members. Farm workers accounted for the remaining 1%. In almost half of cases (47%) the injured persons required more than a three-day absence from farm work, the threshold for legal accident reporting. Over 20% were out of work for between four and 10 days, with 6% unable to work for 11 to 60 days. Close to one-fifth (19%) of those involved in farm accidents lost 61 or more days of work.

Correspondingly, 19% did not lose work time.

This data illustrates clearly the impact a farm accident has on the farmer, the farm family, and the farm business. It is important to take action on your farm to prevent these accidents.

Reduced daylight hours over the coming weeks will make it vitally important to plan tasks properly and make allowances for colder weather. Pay particular attention to lighting around the farmyard and on tractors and farm vehicles. Good preparation is essential to cut risks.