



### **Careful with your worming**

Sheep farmers are mostly clear of lambing now and indeed some lambs are ready for slaughter. It is worth considering the effects of the cold winter on worm burdens this year. A long dry cold winter is unusual for Cornwall and we can hope that less worms than normal will have survived overwintered on the pasture. This means that this is a good year to practice a more restrained and targeted worming strategy.

Take advice from your vet but base your approach on keeping wormer resistance off your farm. Quarantine drench purchased sheep with an avermectin and levamisole before release on your land.

In addition try to prevent the development of wormer resistance on your farm by reducing the number of times you drench. Particularly try to avoid using wormers on ewes at times other than before or at lambing. At lambing time ewes fail to keep worms in check and can seed the pasture with eggs for the next crop of lambs.

With less carry over than normal from last year, lamb dosing may be delayed and with careful use of worm egg counts from pooled faeces samples for information, some lambs may be fit to slaughter without any drenching.

The big proviso is on farms with a *Nematodirus* problem. The hatch of these worms can be quite sudden as the ground warms quickly after a late spring. On such farms watch your lambs carefully and jump in quick with a drench if signs of scour and illthrift appear. In these cases remember to check that coccidiosis is not a problem.