

Sheep Scab – Stop the Cycle



The problem:

- Sheep scab is caused by infestation with the ectoparasitic mite *Psoroptes ovis*
- Costs ~ £9 million/year for control alone
- Notifiable in Scotland (Sheep Scab Order (Scotland) 2010)
- Spread by direct contact but mites can survive off-host for 16-19 days

Biosecurity and disease:

Livestock Movement:

- Maintain fencing, check for gaps/shared rubbing areas
- Double fencing ideal but at least protect high risk areas

Quarantine:

- Select replacement stock from known sources or health status
- Treat incoming stock and quarantine for at least 14 days
- Observe for signs of infestation (nibbling, rubbing, scratching, areas of wool loss etc)

Diagnostic tests and treatment:

- Diagnosis is critical prior to treatment, using skin scrape or blood test
- The new sheep scab diagnostic test, developed at Moredun, is effective at diagnosing early infestation
- A blood sample needs only be taken from some of the flock - 12 for a flock of up to 2000 sheep
- Effective treatments for sheep scab include OP dipping or endectocide injection - consult your vet for advice

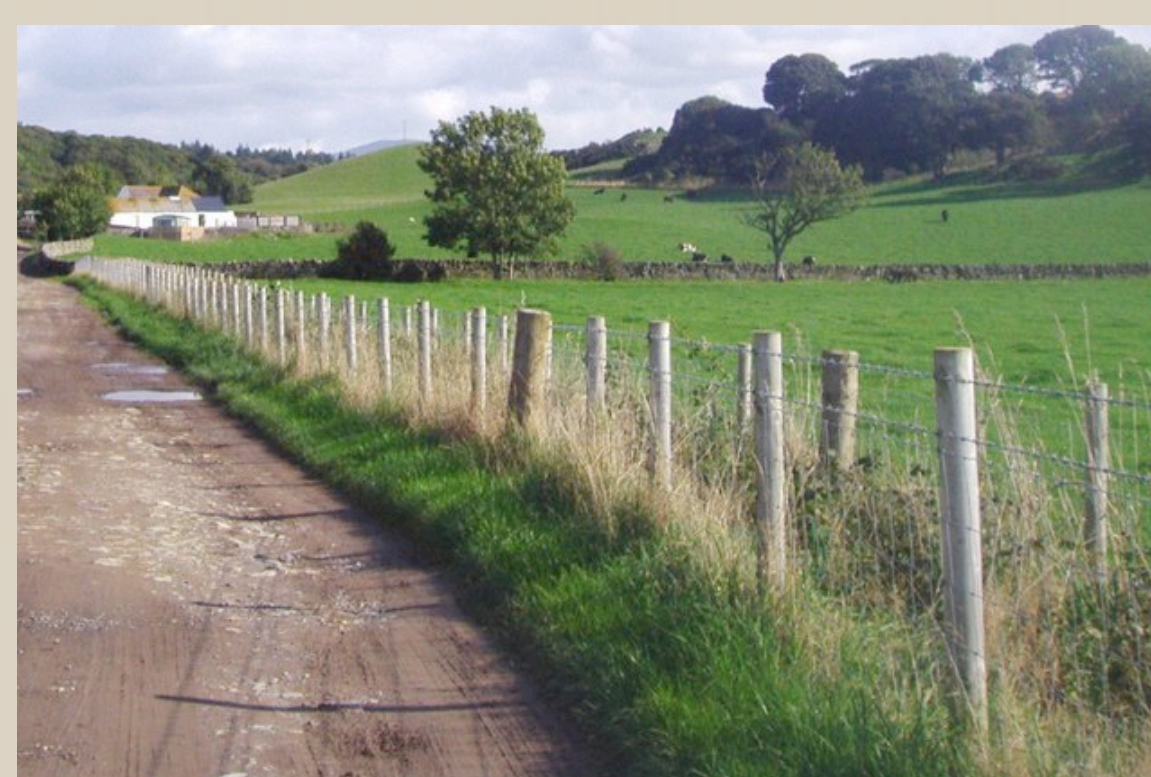


Hygiene:

- Practice good hygiene and use effective disinfectants
- Clean any shared handling equipment/facilities prior to use

Health Plans:

- Control strategies involving neighbouring farms are most effective as a long term solution
- Treat all animals not just those showing signs of disease, but also all 'in contact' stock



What is EPIC?

Funded by Scottish Government, EPIC (Epidemiology Population health and Infectious disease Control) is the Centre of Expertise on Animal Disease Outbreaks. It brings together Scottish-based expertise under one umbrella to deliver independent, evidence-based advice to help prepare Scotland's livestock industry and other stakeholders for animal disease outbreaks.

