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**Abattoir disease statistics 2008
– analysis, conclusions and
recommendations.**



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Analysis of results

- No. of sheep inspected during export season = 30,595 (18,076 sheep, 12,519 OS and NS lambs)
- Total no. of farms submitting sheep for slaughter = 46
- Major disease entity found = Caseous lymphadenitis (CLA, Boils, Cheesy gland) = 10.50%



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Other disease conditions (1)

- *C. tenuicollis* (bladder cysts) = 1.65 %
- *E. granulosus* (Hydatid) – only one cyst found in the whole season. Typed as the G1 strain – the most common sheep variety worldwide. Represents 0.003% of sheep killed. If extrapolated nationally would equate to 3 positive cases per 100,000 sheep or approx. 16 cases in the total FI sheep population of 530,000.



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Other disease conditions (2)

- All other diseases/conditions (eg pleurisy, pneumonia, trauma etc) = presented at very low levels.
- **GENERAL OBSERVATION** – the results from this year's abattoir statistics again reveal that FI livestock are generally presented to the abattoir in good condition with few diseases of any major significance.



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Future action

- Do these disease results indicate the need for action to be taken on farms?
- Simple answer – probably not as far as exports are concerned as none of them have serious animal or public health consequences (most boils are in lungs or lymph nodes which are removed at PM; hydatids are usually found in lungs or livers both of which are discarded).



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Caseous lymphadenitis (Boils)

- Most common disease entity seen in FI sheep – approx. 10% sheep submitted to abattoir. Although not a killer of sheep – in first year of infection almost certainly leads to ↓ wool yield and ↓ growth rate.
- 14/46 farms had levels >10% and 3/46 farms had levels >20%.
- Q. – why is the level so much higher on certain farms?
- Most of the spread occurs from older to younger sheep in and around the shearing shed.
NEED TO KEEP SHEARING SHEDS CLEAN.



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CLA (2)

- Is it worthwhile carrying out a vaccination trial on farm where numbers of affected sheep are high?
- Sheep would have to be vaccinated as lambs and revaccinated annually to follow progress over several years. Group of vaccinated and non-vaccinated sheep compared for growth rates and wool yield during the trial period and checked for boils at PM.



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Hydatids

- Only one confirmed case found in abattoir this year. Smallest number since start of abattoir operations.
- Extrapolated to total no. of sheep currently in FI's this would equate to approx. 16 infected animals.
- Incidence is therefore very low BUT not quite to point of eradication.



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Hydatids (2) – what next?

- Has the time come to stop all dog dosing?
- 46 farms submitted sheep to abattoir – are these representative? (ie 40 farms not checked by MHI.)
- Disease much more likely to be found in adult sheep than in lambs. Abattoir kill this year - sheep 60% and lambs 40%.



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Hydatids (3) – what next?

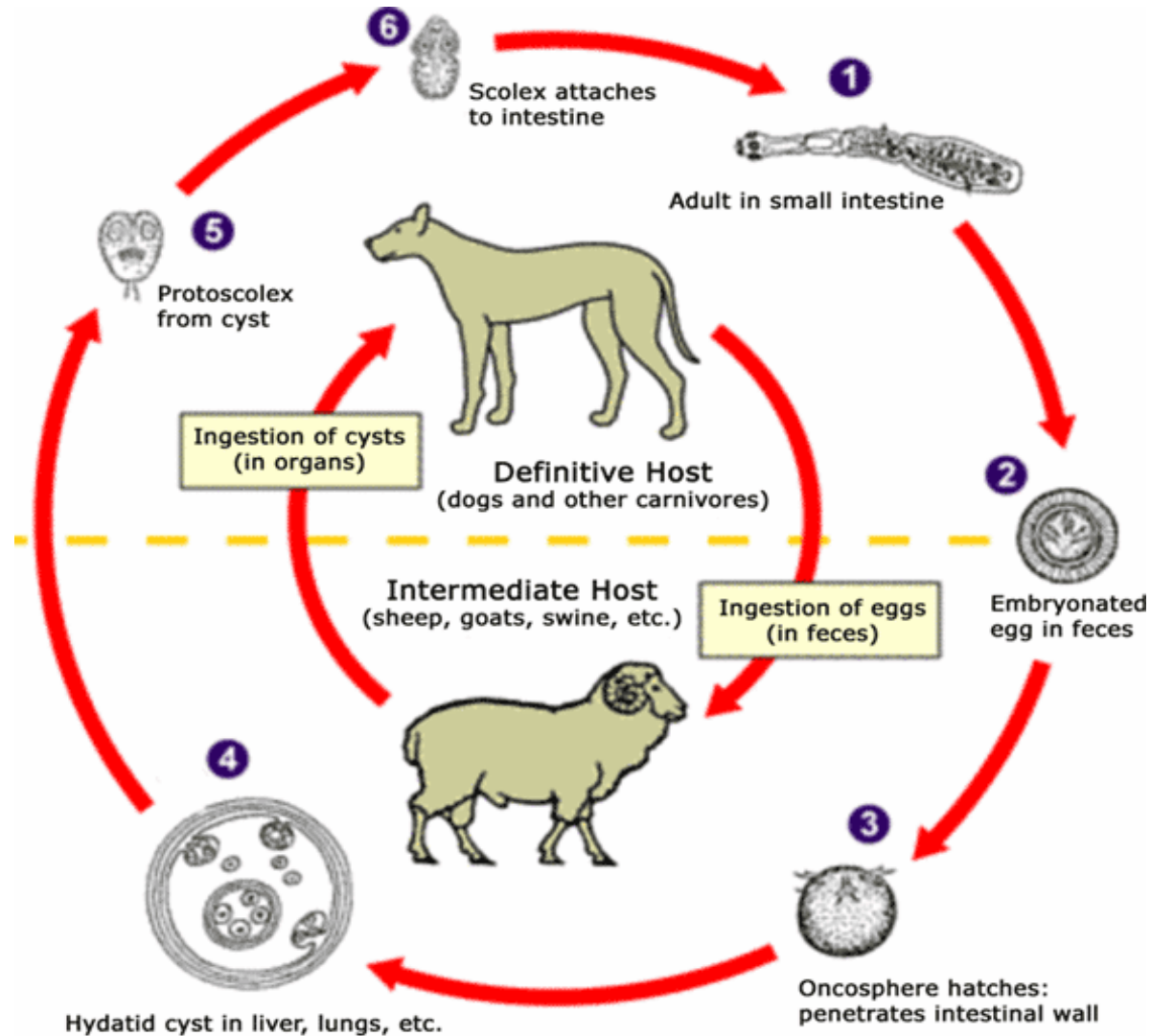
- Most likely reason for disease to still be present after 30+ years of dog dosing – non-compliance with dog dosing or allowing dogs access to infected offals.
- Hydatid cyst can remain viable in adult sheep for many years; tapeworm eggs (from dog faeces) on pasture can remain viable for months, possibly years.



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Hydatids(4) – Life cycle





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Hydatids (5) – what next?

- Predecessor (VE) recommended a trial in which a suitable dog is fed a viable cyst to see when the first tapeworm eggs appear in the faeces. We could then check if our 6 weekly dosing recommendation is adequate to kill all adult tapeworms before they mature.
- This will go ahead next year IF we obtain a viable cyst.
- In the meantime – dosing will remain as it is.



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Conclusion (1)

- General condition of livestock presented for slaughter continues to be very good.
- Worthwhile setting up a small vaccine trial for CLA – to see how effective it might be and to work out cost/benefit analysis.
- Carry out hydatid trial with suitable dog. In meantime continue current dog dosing regime.



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Conclusion (2)

- Of 30595 sheep presented for inspection only 12 carcasses were completely condemned – very low percentage.
- However, some carcass trimming does occur due to bruising. Most bruising occurs when sheep are being handled – during drafting, at loading and during transport, especially if road conditions are poor. Those most affected tend to have travelled the longest distances – not a surprising finding.