

Regular worming is an important part of keeping horses healthy, but an effective parasite control program is about more than simply sticking to a schedule. Different wormers target different parasites, and one of the most commonly overlooked is the tapeworm.

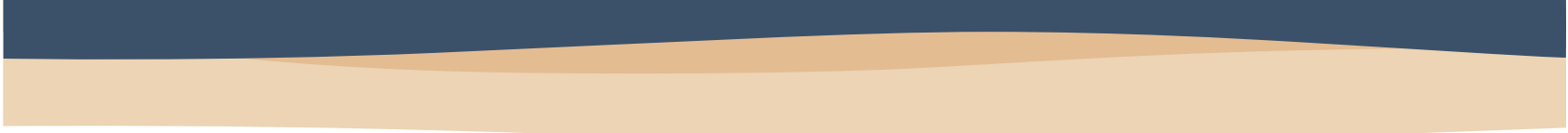
Unlike many internal parasites, tapeworms rarely cause obvious signs until burdens become significant. They attach to the junction of the small intestine and caecum, where they can interfere with normal gut function and have been associated with certain types of colic. Because infections often go unnoticed, tapeworms can quietly become a problem before owners realise they're there, making them an important parasite to consider when reviewing your horse's worming program.

While routine faecal egg counts are an important tool for monitoring many internal parasites, they aren't considered a reliable way to detect tapeworms. Because tapeworms shed eggs intermittently, horses can carry a tapeworm burden even when a faecal egg count returns a negative result. This means a horse may appear healthy and return a low or negative egg count, while still carrying tapeworms that require targeted treatment.

That's why many strategic worming programs include targeted tapeworm treatment, rather than relying on faecal egg counts alone. Combining regular monitoring with an understanding of seasonal parasite risks helps ensure your horse receives the right treatment at the right time.

Spring Is the Time to Review

Spring brings new pasture growth, warmer conditions and increased grazing activity, making it an ideal time to review your horse's parasite management program. As horses spend more time grazing, exposure to pasture-borne parasites naturally increases, making it a good opportunity to ensure your worming program is targeting the parasites most relevant to the season.



It's also a good time to review the active ingredients in your current worming program. Not all wormers provide the same spectrum of control, so understanding what your chosen product treats is just as important as knowing when to administer it. A seasonal review can help identify any gaps in your parasite management plan before they become a problem.

Not All Wormers Treat Tapeworms

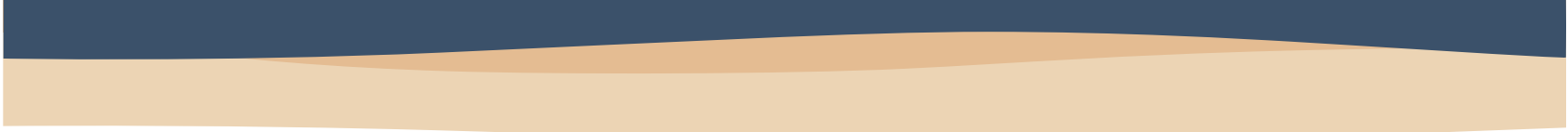
Many horse wormers provide effective control of roundworms, bots and other common internal parasites, but not all contain an active ingredient that controls tapeworms. If tapeworm treatment is required, it's important to choose a product containing praziquantel, the active ingredient specifically used to treat and control tapeworms.

[iO Equigard with Tape](#) combines ivermectin and praziquantel in one easy-to-administer oral paste, providing broad-spectrum control of susceptible roundworms, bots, tapeworms and skin lesions caused by summer sores. By combining both active ingredients in a single treatment, it offers a convenient solution for horse owners wanting broad-spectrum parasite control, including tapeworms, as part of their regular worming program.

As with any parasite control program, treatment should be based on your horse's individual risk, grazing management and veterinary advice. Selecting the right product helps ensure your worming program is addressing the parasites most likely to affect your horse throughout the year.

The Bottom Line

An effective worming program isn't just about when you worm, it's about making sure you're treating the parasites that matter.



This spring, take the opportunity to review your horse's worming program and ask one simple question: Does my wormer treat tapeworms?

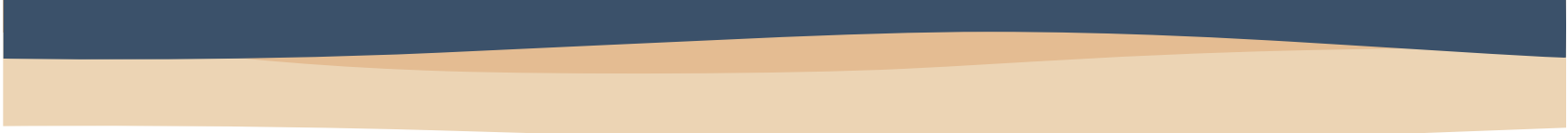
If the answer is no – or you're not sure – consider a product containing praziquantel to help ensure this commonly overlooked parasite isn't left behind. A few minutes spent reviewing your parasite management program today can help support your horse's health and wellbeing throughout the grazing season.

There is no single parasite management program that suits every herd. Rainfall, stocking density, grazing systems, cattle class, pasture management and previous parasite history all influence parasite risk. The most effective programs are tailored to the operation rather than following the same routine year after year.

Effective parasite management starts with understanding what you're trying to control. Internal parasites, external parasites and seasonal conditions all influence treatment decisions. Regular monitoring and observing cattle performance can help identify when intervention is likely to provide the greatest production benefit.

Injection or pour-on?

Injectable and pour-on formulations both have an important place within cattle parasite management. Injectable treatments may suit situations



where cattle are already being processed through the yards and accurate dosing is a priority.

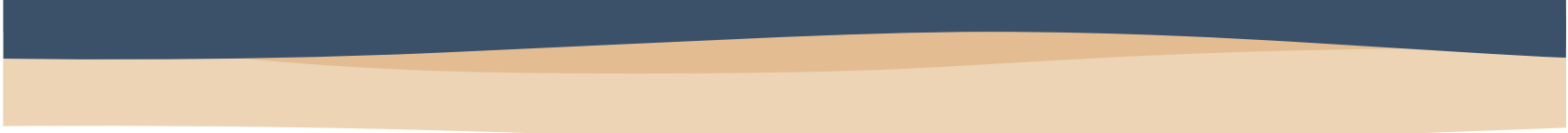
Pour-on formulations can be a convenient option where ease of application and reduced handling time are important considerations. The right choice depends on your management system rather than one formulation being universally better than the other.

Don't rely on one treatment alone

An effective parasite management program is about more than selecting a product. It should include seasonal planning, reviewing parasite pressure, rotating active ingredients where appropriate, monitoring treatment effectiveness and considering nutritional management alongside parasite control. Regular review helps ensure the program continues to meet the needs of the herd.

Independents Own provide a range of different [treatment options](#) depending on your production system and management objectives. The best choice will depend on seasonal parasite pressure, stock class and how cattle are managed.

Effective parasite management is not about treating more often. It is about making informed decisions, using the right active and administration method at the right time and protecting production throughout the year.



Feed is expensive, and every kilogram counts through winter.

When cattle aren't performing as expected, nutrition often takes centre stage. However, external parasites such as cattle lice can quietly reduce productivity without causing obvious illness.

Winter provides ideal conditions for cattle lice. Longer coat length and closer contact between animals allow lice populations to build, increasing irritation and placing additional pressure on cattle at a time when nutritional demand is already high.

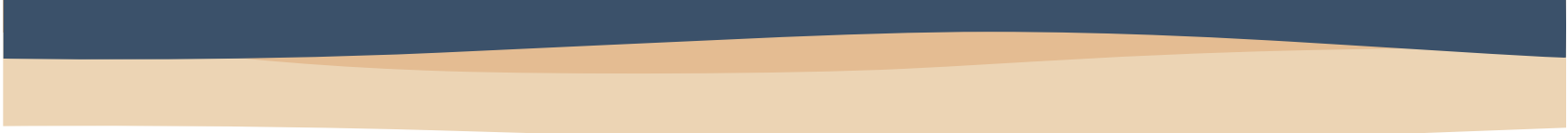
While cattle lice are commonly associated with rubbing and hair loss, the bigger impact is often on production. Constant irritation can reduce grazing time and increase energy expenditure, affecting feed conversion, weight gain and overall performance. As lice numbers increase, more energy is diverted away from growth and production and into responding to the infestation.

Why do cattle lice become more of an issue in winter?

Unlike flies and many other external parasites, cattle lice spend their entire life cycle on the animal. Adult lice lay eggs, known as nits, which are attached firmly to the hair. These hatch into immature lice before developing into adults, with the lifecycle often completed in as little as three to four weeks under favourable conditions.

During winter, longer coats provide ideal protection for lice while cattle naturally spend more time in close contact, making it easier for infestations to spread through a herd. Because lice survive for only a short time away from the host animal, they are primarily transferred through direct contact.

This is why winter is considered the highest-risk period for cattle lice and why early monitoring and timely treatment are important before



populations have the opportunity to build. Because these impacts develop gradually, infestations are often overlooked until production has already been affected.

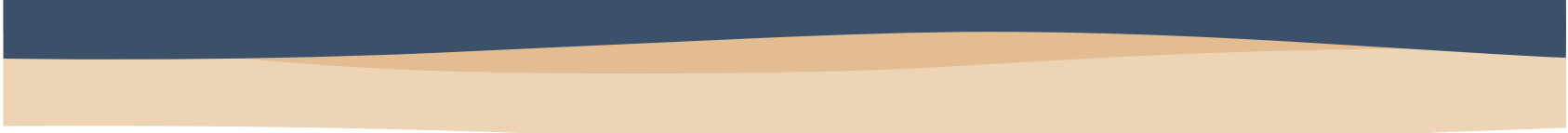
Regular monitoring throughout winter is an important part of a broader parasite management program. Pay particular attention to young stock, animals in poorer condition and herds with a history of lice.

Products such as [Doramax Pour-On](#), [Doramax Injectable](#), [Incarcerate](#) and [Eprinomax](#) provide a practical option for the treatment and control of cattle lice as part of a broader winter parasite management program.

Protecting cattle from lice is not just about reducing irritation. It is about protecting feed conversion, maintaining productivity and helping cattle perform through one of the most demanding times of the year.

As temperatures drop, it can be easy to assume parasite pressure slows down completely through winter.

But while seasonal conditions change, internal parasites can still impact feed conversion, condition and overall production performance, particularly in young stock or higher challenge environments.



Winter worming is not just about treating parasites. It is about protecting performance during a time when feed quality, nutritional demand and seasonal pressure can already place livestock under additional stress.

Why worm burdens still matter through winter

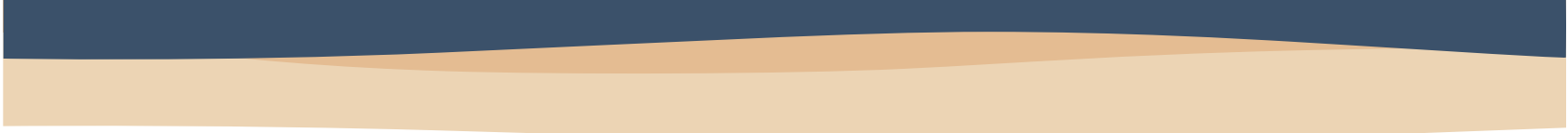
Internal parasites can quietly impact productivity without always causing obvious clinical signs.

Reduced growth rates, poorer feed utilisation and animals struggling to maintain condition can all point to underlying worm burdens limiting performance.

Young stock are often more vulnerable during this time, particularly where pasture contamination levels remain high or seasonal conditions place additional pressure on nutrition and growth.

In higher rainfall or ongoing challenge environments, worms such as barber's pole worm, brown stomach worm and black scour worm may still remain relevant through cooler months.

Even low-level burdens can impact how efficiently sheep convert feed into growth and production. Protecting feed conversion becomes particularly important through winter when feed costs increase and pasture quality begins to decline.



Why timing matters

Strategic winter worming is not simply about following a routine treatment calendar.

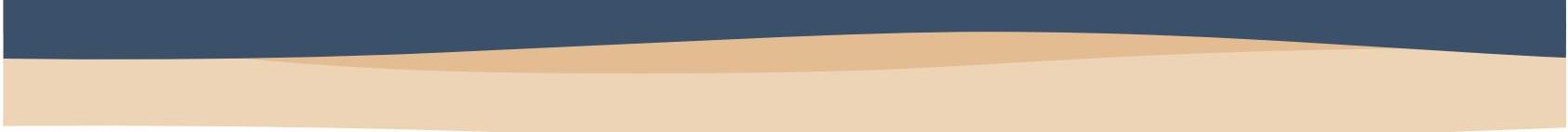
It is about identifying periods where intervention is likely to protect performance, reduce pasture contamination and support livestock through seasonal pressure.

Well-timed treatments may help reduce the impact of existing burdens before animals enter more demanding periods such as late pregnancy or poorer seasonal feed conditions.

Where long-acting treatments fit

Long-acting parasite control products can play a role in helping manage ongoing worm challenges while reducing repeated handling and treatment pressure.

Products such as the new [Moxistar Long-Acting Injection for Sheep](#) provide extended activity against key internal parasites in sheep and may assist in maintaining protection through periods of ongoing exposure.



As with any parasite management strategy, treatment decisions should be guided by seasonal conditions, risk profile and overall production goals.

Winter worming is not just about parasite control.

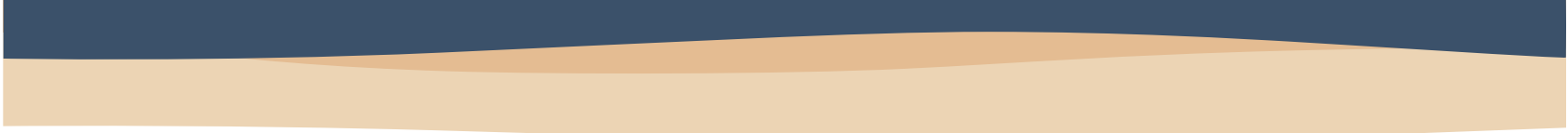
It is about protecting condition, feed conversion and overall production efficiency during the colder months.

Winter is often when lice activity becomes more noticeable in sheep.

Rubbing, wool damage and irritation can all become more obvious as stock carry heavier fleeces through cooler conditions.

While lice may not always cause dramatic illness, they can still impact comfort, condition and overall productivity if left unmanaged.

Why lice become more noticeable in winter

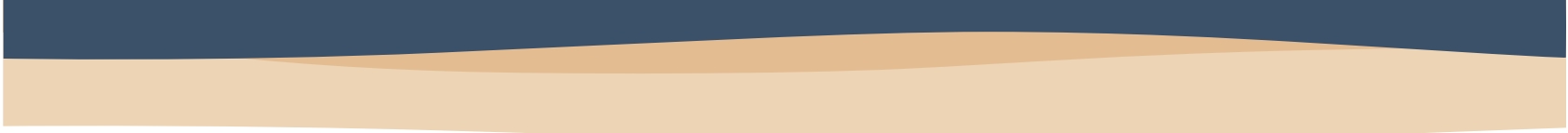


Lice populations can increase through cooler months as longer fleeces provide a more favourable environment for spread and survival. Closer contact between sheep can also increase transmission within mobs.

Because irritation develops gradually, producers may first notice signs such as rubbing, biting or wool damage before identifying lice as the underlying issue.

Common signs of lice activity may include:

- rubbing on fences or infrastructure
- wool derangement or damage
- biting or scratching behaviour
- irritation and restlessness
- reduced wool quality



Even where clinical signs appear relatively mild, lice can still place additional pressure on sheep during periods where nutritional demand and seasonal conditions are already challenging.

Production impacts

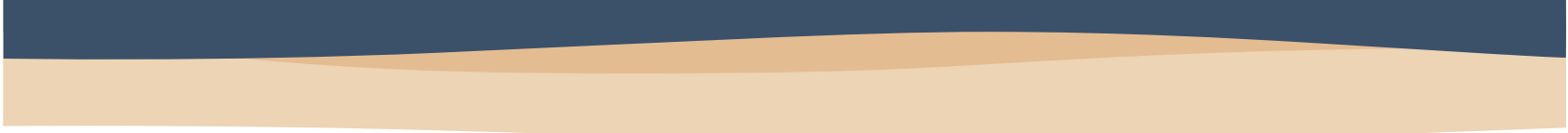
Lice do not just affect fleece quality. However, persistent irritation and stress may impact overall condition and productivity, particularly through winter when maintaining feed efficiency becomes increasingly important.

This is why early identification and timely management remain important within broader winter production programs.

Why timing matters

Managing lice effectively often relies on seasonal timing and reducing spread within mobs. Addressing lice pressure before it becomes widespread may help reduce production impacts and support overall flock performance through winter.

Products such as [Encore Pour-On Lousicide for Sheep](#), [Jet Away Blow Fly & Lice for Sheep](#) and [Incarcerate](#) provide a practical option for the control of lice in livestock through a convenient pour-on or jetting application.



As with any treatment program, product selection and timing should be based on seasonal conditions, flock management and overall production goals.

Winter lice pressure can quietly impact productivity. Identifying issues early and applying practical seasonal management strategies can help support comfort, wool quality and overall flock performance.

It's a common rule of thumb to worm horses at the change of each season.

Autumn rolls around, and it's time to treat. Then again in winter, spring and summer – simple, routine, and easy to stick to.

While that approach is largely correct, it can lead to some parasites being missed and may also increase the risk of resistance over time.

Moving from autumn into winter, things can feel like they're slowing down. Pasture growth drops off, temperatures cool, and overall activity seems lower.



But parasite pressure doesn't disappear – it just changes.

Some worms persist on pasture, while others remain inside the horse in different stages of their lifecycle. So even if you're not seeing obvious signs, there can still be a burden there ticking along in the background.

During autumn, and into winter, the key worms to watch for are small strongyles, tapeworms and, in some cases, roundworms – each behaving slightly differently as conditions cool.

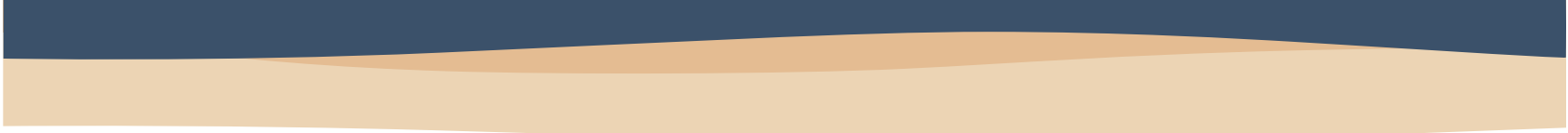
Which worms' matter through autumn and winter?

Small strongyles are one of the biggest considerations at this time of year. Over the cooler months, they can sit in an encysted (dormant) stage within the gut lining. They're not always causing obvious issues immediately, but they can build up and emerge later.

Roundworms tend to be more of a concern in younger horses but are still worth keeping in mind depending on your age groups.

Tapeworms are a bit different again. Unlike strongyles and roundworms, horses don't pick up tapeworms directly from pasture. Instead, they're infected by ingesting small pasture mites (oribatid mites) that act as an intermediate host. This means their lifecycle is slower and more seasonal, and they tend to build up over time rather than spike quickly.

Because of this, tapeworms are often targeted at specific times of year – with autumn being a common point to address them.



Why product choice matters

To target encysted small strongyles, actives such as moxidectin or specific fenbendazole programs are commonly used.

For tapeworm, actives such as praziquantel or pyrantel (at the correct dose) are typically used, often as part of an autumn treatment.

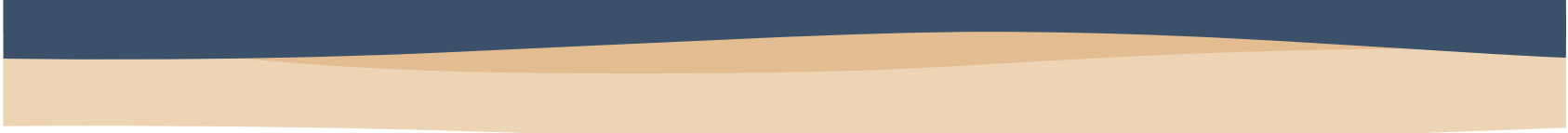
For roundworms, particularly in younger horses, actives such as fenbendazole or pyrantel may be used depending on the situation.

For broader parasite control, combination actives may be used where multiple parasites are being targeted at once.

During the autumn to winter period, the focus is often on managing existing burdens and targeting parasites that persist through cooler conditions.

This is where products such as iO Fenbender, iO Equiduo Liquid and iO Blade can play a role within a broader worming program, as they contain actives suited to targeting common parasites during this time of year.

Product choice should always be guided by what you're looking to target, along with faecal egg counts, seasonal conditions and your overall worming approach. If you require further assistance, consult your local veterinarian.



Winter performance is often determined well before conditions tighten.

As pasture quality declines and energy demand increases, cattle can begin to lose condition quickly if not managed early. While feed availability is a key part of the picture, it's not the only factor influencing how animals perform through the colder months.

Condition, nutrition and trace mineral status all play a role — and the impacts aren't always immediately obvious.

Preparation matters

Cattle heading into winter in lighter condition are more vulnerable to production losses, slower growth and reduced reproductive performance.

For breeders, this can affect conception rates and recovery post-calving. For growing cattle, it can mean setbacks that take time — and cost — to recover from.

By the time condition visibly declines, it can be difficult to regain ground. That's why early preparation is key.

Pasture quality and intake

As temperatures drop, pasture growth slows and feed quality typically declines. Even where feed appears adequate, it may not meet the nutritional



requirements of the animal.

Energy and protein are often the primary focus, but trace minerals can also become limiting — particularly in systems where pasture composition or seasonal conditions reduce availability.

The role of trace minerals

Trace minerals such as zinc, copper, manganese and selenium are involved in a range of biological functions, including immune response, reproduction and metabolic processes.

Deficiencies are not always obvious. In many cases, they are subclinical — meaning animals may appear normal but are not performing at their full potential.

These hidden gaps can become more significant during periods of increased demand, such as pregnancy, lactation or growth, and during seasonal transitions like the lead into winter.

Key times

The lead-up to winter is a useful time to review cattle health and nutrition, particularly for:

- Weaners and growing cattle
- Pregnant and lactating cows
- Cattle under environmental or nutritional stress

Taking a proactive approach can help maintain condition and support performance through the colder months.



Supporting cattle through seasonal change

Managing cattle through winter is rarely about a single input. It's a combination of feed planning, monitoring condition and addressing any nutritional gaps before they become limiting.

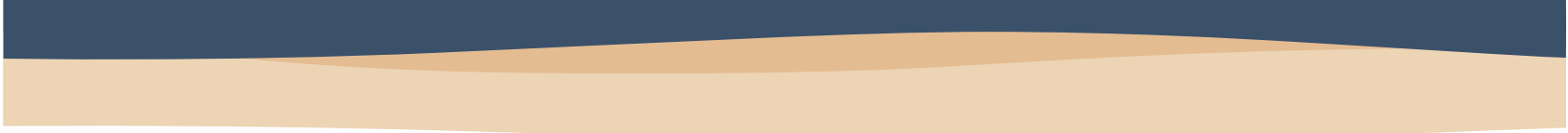
Where trace mineral status may be a factor, targeted supplementation can play a role alongside broader nutrition strategies.

Products such as Acti-Trace and Acti-Trace with B12 provide a convenient option for delivering essential trace minerals and Vitamin B12 during key production stages or periods of increased demand.

Winter brings its challenges, but the impact on cattle performance is largely shaped by decisions made in the lead-up.

By focusing on condition, nutrition and trace mineral status early, producers can better position their cattle to maintain performance and recover more effectively when conditions improve.

Drying off is more than just the end of a lactation period — it's a key opportunity to reset cows and set them up for the next production cycle.



How cows are managed during this time can influence body condition, recovery, and ultimately reproductive performance in the following season.

Why drying off matters

The drying off period allows cows to redirect energy away from milk production and toward maintenance, recovery and preparing for the next joining.

Cows that remain under nutritional pressure for too long can struggle to regain condition, which may impact:

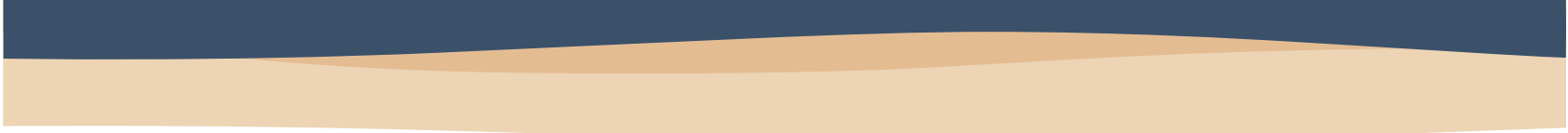
- Conception rates
- Calving outcomes
- Overall productivity in the next cycle

Managing this transition well helps support both animal welfare and long-term performance.

Condition is key

Body condition score (BCS) is one of the most important factors to monitor when drying off.

Cows that are too light at drying off can find it difficult to regain condition, particularly as pasture quality declines heading into winter. On the other hand, cows in good condition are better positioned to maintain performance and cycle effectively at joining.



Early intervention is critical — it's far easier to maintain condition than to rebuild it later.

Nutrition through the transition

As cows dry off, their nutritional requirements change, but they don't disappear.

Energy and protein remain important, particularly where pasture quality is declining. At the same time, trace minerals continue to play a role in supporting:

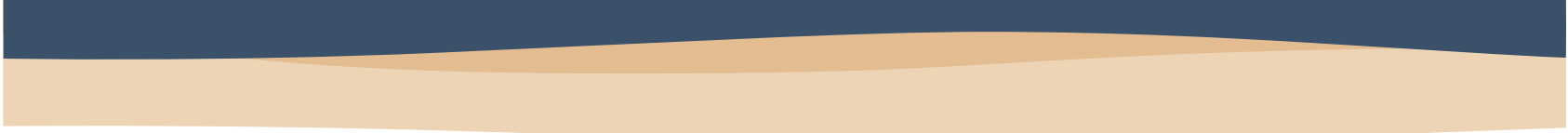
- reproductive function
- immune response
- overall metabolic health

Subclinical deficiencies can limit performance without obvious signs, making them easy to overlook during this period.

Supporting recovery and fertility

The period following drying off is closely linked to reproductive performance in the next joining.

Ensuring cows have adequate nutrition and mineral status supports:

- 
- recovery post-lactation
 - return to cycling
 - improved conception outcomes

This is particularly important in seasonal systems where timing and fertility have a direct impact on overall herd productivity.

Taking a practical approach

Drying off should be viewed as part of a broader management strategy, rather than a single event.

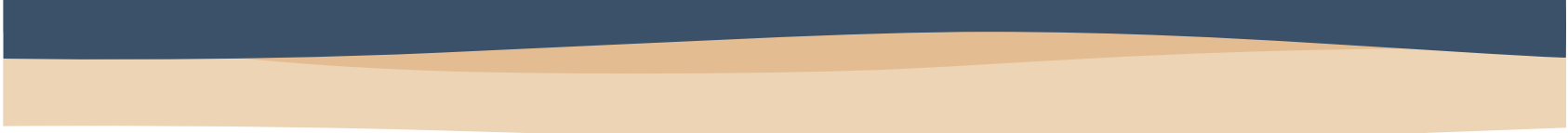
Monitoring condition, reviewing feed availability and considering nutritional gaps can help ensure cows are well supported through this transition.

Where trace mineral status may be limiting, targeted supplementation can be used alongside feed planning to support recovery and performance.

Products such as Acti-Trace and Acti-Trace with B12 provide a convenient option for delivering key trace minerals and Vitamin B12 during this period.

The drying off period is an opportunity to set the foundation for the next season.

By focusing on condition, nutrition and recovery, producers can position their cattle for improved fertility and performance when it matters most.



Vitamin B12 is involved in energy metabolism, helping cattle convert nutrients from feed into usable energy.

It works closely with trace minerals such as cobalt, which is required for B12 production in the rumen. When this process is limited, energy utilisation can be affected.

Why deficiency isn't always obvious

Unlike some nutritional issues, Vitamin B12 deficiency is often subclinical. Cattle may appear healthy, but performance may be below expectations. This can include:

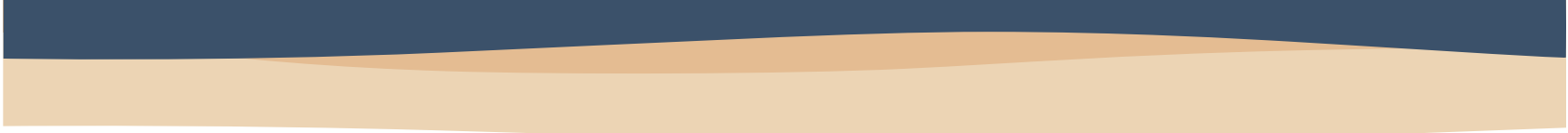
- reduced weight gain
- lower feed efficiency
- slower recovery during challenging periods

When to consider Vitamin B12 supplementation

Vitamin B12 supplementation may be worth considering during periods of increased demand or stress, including:

Weaning

Weaners are adapting to dietary and environmental changes, which can impact intake and energy balance.



Joining and early pregnancy

Energy requirements increase, and maintaining condition is important for reproductive performance.

Calving and lactation

Cows face increased nutritional demand, and any limitations in energy utilisation can have a greater impact.

Seasonal transitions

Changes in pasture quality – particularly heading into winter – can influence nutrient intake and availability.

Periods of stress

Transport, environmental conditions or feed changes can all place additional pressure on cattle.

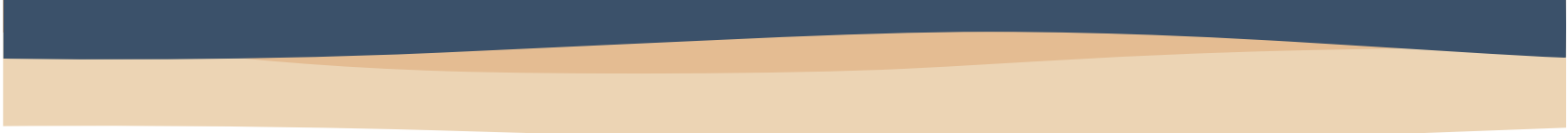
Using B12 as part of a broader approach

Vitamin B12 supplementation is often used alongside trace mineral support, rather than as a standalone solution.

A targeted approach allows supplementation to be timed around periods where cattle are most likely to benefit.

Choosing the right option

Not every situation requires additional Vitamin B12, but understanding when it may be useful allows for more informed decision-making.



In operations where trace mineral status and energy demand are both considerations, combining Vitamin B12 with trace mineral supplementation can provide a more complete approach.

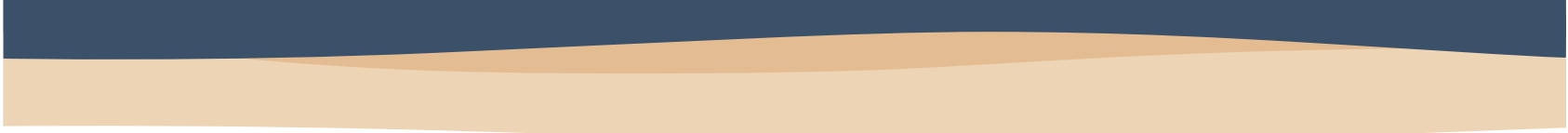
Products such as Acti-Trace with B12 offer a convenient way to deliver both trace minerals and Vitamin B12 in a single injection during key production stages.

Across Australia, internal parasite control in both sheep and cattle is changing. The shift toward triple-active (“3-way”) drenches is not driven by marketing or fashion, but by necessity. On many properties, single- and dual-active drenches no longer provide reliable or predictable control.

Anthelmintic resistance is now well established in sheep parasites and is increasingly recognised in cattle systems. Resistance already exists at low levels in most worm populations. Drenching does not create resistance; it selects for resistant worms. Once resistance becomes established, it does not reverse. This has forced a change in how drenches are selected and why combination products now sit at the centre of modern parasite control programs.

Why triple actives work

Triple-active drenches combine three unrelated chemical families, typically a macrocyclic lactone, a benzimidazole and levamisole. Each attacks worms in a different way. For a worm to survive treatment, it must already carry resistance to all three actives at the same time.



This is the key advantage. Field experience and modelling show that combination drenches dramatically reduce the number of worms that survive treatment compared with single-active products. Triple actives are effective against susceptible worms and against populations with single or dual resistance, which now describes many Australian sheep flocks and is increasingly relevant in cattle, particularly for *Cooperia* and other gastrointestinal nematodes. When used appropriately, they also slow the rate at which resistance genes accumulate in the worm population.

Low-volume triple-active formulations add a further practical benefit, particularly in cattle. Accurate dosing is easier, under-dosing is less likely, and consistency across variable liveweights improves. Given that under-dosing is a well-recognised driver of resistance in both sheep and cattle, this alone is a meaningful advantage.

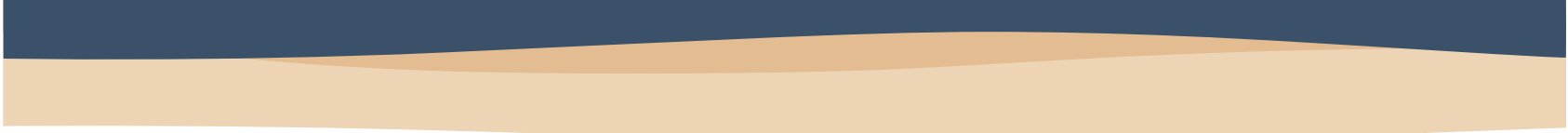
What triple actives do not do

Triple-active drenches are not a silver bullet. They do not remove resistance risk, replace management, or justify routine blanket drenching in either species.

Misuse can still accelerate resistance. Frequent whole-mob treatments, drenching when worm burdens are low, repeated reliance on the same combination, or moving stock immediately onto low-contamination paddocks all increase selection pressure. These principles apply equally to sheep and cattle, even though clinical disease may be less obvious in adult cattle. Triple actives are powerful tools, but they remain tools, not strategies.

Refugia – the concept that protects drench life

Refugia refers to the proportion of the worm population that is not exposed to a drench at the time of treatment. This includes worms in untreated animals, eggs and larvae on pasture, and life stages not affected by the product.



Refugia matters because susceptible worms dilute resistant survivors after drenching. When refugia is large, resistance develops slowly. When refugia is small or eliminated, resistance develops rapidly. Preserving refugia is the single most important factor in slowing resistance, regardless of which drench is used.

Why faecal egg counts matter more than ever

Faecal egg counts (FECs or WECs) underpin evidence-based parasite control in both species. They answer two essential questions: is treatment needed, and did the treatment work?

Pre-drench testing helps avoid unnecessary treatments and preserves refugia. Post-drench egg counts, or formal faecal egg count reduction tests, confirm whether a drench remains effective on a property. Without post-treatment checks, resistance can develop silently until control fails.

Some retailers now offer egg counts before a sale. The next step is normalising post-treatment follow-up, particularly in cattle systems where resistance can be overlooked until production losses occur.

Looking ahead

The move to triple-active drenches reflects a broader shift away from product-led decisions toward system-based parasite management. The future lies in combining appropriate chemistry with testing, refugia management, grazing decisions and informed advice.

Used thoughtfully, triple-active drenches protect sheep and cattle performance today while buying time against resistance tomorrow. That balance — productivity now and sustainability long term — is the real power of three.