



SCOPS Group Response to the Re Classification of Zolvix™

The recent announcement that Zolvix™ is to become a POM-VPS product on 1st July has understandably sparked some controversy. The priority of the SCOPS principles is to reduce reliance on anthelmintics. However, effective anthelmintics remain a vital tool for sheep farmers and we wish to make our position on this change in classification clear.

The scientific evidence firmly supports the need to integrate new anthelmintic groups into worming strategies at an early stage. As a result, SCOPS has worked hard to promote the use of the new actives* as a vital part of worming programmes on all sheep farms since the launch of Zolvix 7 years ago (and Startect 5 years ago).

*'SCOPS does not consider simply sitting back and waiting for other anthelmintic groups to fail before using the new actives as a sensible option'. We must get these new actives used, they are not doing any good sat on the shelf' says Lesley Stubbings. 'This approach does not help to prolong the life of the older actives nor does it protect the new active itself, because heavy reliance on a new group once the others have failed will bring about accelerated resistance over a short period of time, as we have seen in the Netherlands**.*

Unfortunately, despite the efforts of SCOPS and others, the use of new actives (groups 4 and 5) has been woefully low, representing only around 1% of total wormer doses in the UK in 2015/16. 'At this level there are two problems' Lesley adds 'Firstly, it is too little to have any significant impact on the development of Anthelmintic Resistance (AR) to other groups and secondly, there was a danger that these products may be withdrawn if revenue was overtaken by the cost of keeping them on the market. That would have been a disaster. Added to this is the stark fact that the situation with AR is getting worse year on year, with reports of resistance to the 3-ML group now becoming commonplace***.

SCOPS recognizes that this change represents a significant challenge and will continue to work hard to provide the right guidance and training to SQPs, Pharmacists and Vets to ensure Zolvix is used responsibly and only in the recommended ways*, unless veterinary advice suggests otherwise for example on farms where triple resistance has been confirmed.

Plans for advanced training of SQPs are already in hand and will commence before 1st July. In addition, there will be a mechanism to monitor how Zolvix is being prescribed providing evidence of responsible use.

SCOPS Group
31st March 2017

References:

*SCOPS advice on using the 4-Ad and 5 SI anthelmintic groups
<http://www.scops.org.uk/content/SCOPS-Technical-Manual-4th-Edition-updated-September-2013.pdf>

**Monepantel resistance on Dutch sheep farms. Vet Rec Nov 2014;175 (17):418

***WAARD Project results. <http://www.scops.org.uk/news-detail.php?NewsID=29>