



New tactics take on lice

SAM WHITE

IT MIGHT be a couple of years away yet, but one Sydney scientist is working hard on lice prevention that he thinks could be invaluable to the sheep industry.

Principal of Down Under Technologies, Henry King, has already created the Thermoskin product which protects sheep from the cold after shearing.

Thermoskin is a spray-on lanolin-based product that places a fine, natural film all over the freshly shorn sheep to help the animal maintain a consistent body temperature, irrespective of the conditions, for as long as six weeks after it is applied.

Sheep are run through the spray on the way back to the paddock after shearing.

Mr King said the incorporated lice treatment was like a direct extension from Thermoskin.

He said it would be a two-in-one product that would protect sheep from hypothermia as well as keep lice in check.

"It is still in the early stages. We haven't done any field testing yet. It's still in the lab," he said.

But he was confident it would be as effective against lice as Thermoskin had been against cold.

Adding to the arsenal, chemical company, Bayer, released its latest attack against lice late last year: its new product, Avenge.

Product brand manager, David Ross, said Avenge was 10 years in the making.

He said one of the biggest advantages with the new product

was the assurance it would break resistance.

Because it was new chemical technology, the lice infestation in the flock would suffer, he said.

The active ingredient in the product was imidacloprid, which belonged to the class of chemical insecticides known as neonicotinoids.

"It is the first new molecule in sheep lice control for more than five years," Mr Ross said.

"It acts selectively on the central nervous system of lice for rapid control so it's known as a knock-down chemical.

"We did trials on 12 sheep properties in every State and Territory and we have had some really positive results from farmers since it has been released."

The trials involved 14,000 sheep and were carried out across a five to 12-month period – and Mr Ross said the results spoke for themselves.

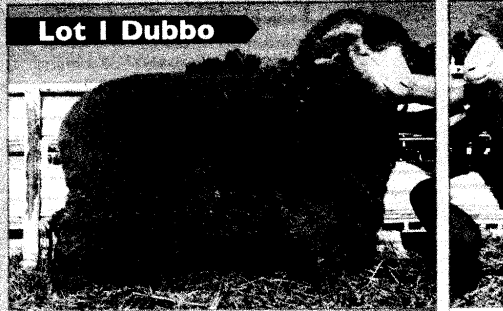
When he returned to the properties five to six months later, all 12 had a 100 per cent reduction in lice.

"Avenge has a protective period of four weeks, so it continues to kill the lice for a month after it is applied," Mr Ross said.

The facts and figures available to producers about the product proved its effectiveness, he said.

Avenge, another plus for farmers in their battle against lice, he said, was a new option to add to their rotation that wasn't available anywhere else.

"Adding a new chemical to de-louse will break resistance if they have had ongoing problems with lice," Mr Ross said.



TAG NO: RP08-0029(E.T)
SIRE: RP04-2536 DAM: P394 X GD418 P383
MICRON: 20.0 C.V: 13.5 S.D: 2.7
DOB: JULY 2008 B.W: 130KG



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