



Survey Results Summary

A short survey conducted using Survey Monkey during January 2024 was used to gauge the opinion from vets, SQPs and farmers and gather questions to help inform the workshop discussions and its outputs. There were 152 replies, and it is accepted that all the answers are subjective opinion. A pdf of the survey results is available.

1. There was a good balance between vets (34%) SQPs (26%) and sheep farmers (32%) and a wide geographic spread of respondents. There is always the potential issue of cohort bias with this type of survey because it is more likely to attract those who have had issues with HC rather than those who have not. While bearing this in mind, there does seem to be a reasonable balance in the replies.
2. 40% reported they had seen a slight increase in the incidence of clinical disease due to HC – this applied to both ewes and lambs. Tendency for the significant increase to be more in ewes, but this was balanced out by a similar number saying there had been no change. No major differences between vet/SQP and farmer respondents.
3. More than half (57%) scored the seriousness of HC on sheep farms at 8 or above (out of a scale of 1-10); only 14.5% said it was a score of 5 or less. There was no difference in scoring between vets, SQPs and farmers.
4. Just over 50% thought there had been a shift in the time of year that they experience problems with HC. Only 9% said there had been no shift (the remainder did not know).
5. Of those who said there has been a shift, nearly 70% said that HC issues were over an extended period of the year. This included comments such as earlier in the year; more sporadic and later in the year underlining the difference between areas/farms.
6. Diagnostics – the most cited were FECs (81%), with clinical signs at 62.5%, followed by PM/fallen stock (51%). PNA saining was ticked by just 21% of respondents, FAMACHA (20%) with larval cultures only 3%. This underlines the fact that in many cases a definitive diagnosis of HC is largely subjective (e.g a very high FEC) and not backed up by speciation.
7. In terms of AR, the majority said that they 'did not know' what the AR status was for the classes of anthelmintic, with 'none' being the next most common answer. Given the lack of speciation tools (see above) this is to be expected and encouraging to see that AR is not being taken as a forgone conclusion.
8. The use of Barbervax vaccine was very low (6%) rising to 11.5% of vet respondents. 34% had never heard of it and the remainder just had not used it.



9. Treatment (30%) and diagnosis (17%) were the two most posed questions. Life-cycle (9%) was the next most mentioned followed by prevalence, resistance and vaccine (6% each). Clinical signs, risk and grazing strategies were next at 4/5% of responses.

10. The main questions around treatment are shown in the pdf attached and cover topics including product/active choice; TST; complications with liver fluke and potential access to other actives.