

JOINT STATEMENT FROM AHDA, NSA, NFU AND VMD ON WITHDRAWAL PERIODS FOR OP SHEEP DIPS

The Veterinary Medicines Directorate recently announced that the meat withdrawal periods for 2 of the 3 Organophosphate sheep dips available to UK sheep farmers have been temporarily extended from 35 to 70 days. The 2 dips are Cooper's Ectoforce and Osmond's Goldfleece. The 3rd OP dip, Paracide 62, has had a 70 day meat withdrawal attached to its use since May 2009.

This change has come about as a precautionary measure because the residues data currently available for Coopers Ectoforce Sheep Dip and Osmonds Goldfleece do not meet current data requirements and are insufficient to confirm that a 35 day withdrawal period is adequate to avoid residues being present in meat. Following the precautionary principle and whilst new residue studies are being conducted a longer withdrawal period has been set. The selected withdrawal period is the same as that for the very similar product Paracide 62 (for which there are residues data which meet current data requirements). The action is **not** in any way linked to operator safety where expressed concerns have related to external exposure (and not to consumption of food potential containing very low levels of the active ingredient).

Following queries from industry the VMD have confirmed that this change would only relate to new stocks of the 2 dips so any Ectoforce or Goldfleece product currently held on farm, or in the retail chain at present, can be used as per their label instructions, including their stated meat withdrawal times. New stock coming into the market place will show the revised meat withdrawals in their label instructions. Farmers should therefore read the product instructions and use the dip as directed to ensure correct usage and compliance. NFU, NSA and AHDA are working with other industry stakeholders to ensure that this information is understood by all involved in the sheep supply chain and red meat sector and will continue to discuss and monitor the situation with the VMD.

Organic sheep farmers should check how this temporary extension will be implemented within their scheme standards with their certification body.

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