

Information for the use of Coopers® Ovilis® Footvax®

The following information is provided by Department of Primary Industries and Regions (PIRSA) to support producers purchasing Coopers® Ovilis® Footvax®. Using Footvax alone will not cure footrot from your flock. Seek advice from an experienced footrot advisor before planned control or eradication activities. A well thought out plan will help success rates.



The vaccine is more suited for used on flocks with virulent footrot than benign footrot. Footvax is a killed multi-serotype (10 strain) vaccine registered to aid in the control of footrot in sheep. Effective vaccination¹ can provide a protection rate of up to 80%² of the flock and cure around 60%³ of infected sheep.

Following two vaccinations at least 6 weeks apart, sheep are protected against footrot for up to 10-12 weeks in merinos and up to 16 weeks in British breeds. Effective immunity is developed after the second dose. Further booster vaccinations, if required, up to 12 months later, will again give a similar protection period. Given that the protection provided by the vaccine is short term, timing of a vaccination program is critical. The booster vaccination needs to be timed just before the expected start of the spread period so sheep have high levels of immunity when they are most susceptible to getting footrot.

The inability of the vaccine to give total protection or cure all affected sheep, means vaccination is only part of a well-planned footrot program. Vaccine use is extremely valuable in situations where sheep can not be foot bathed regularly. This may occur during lambing, on extensive properties where mustering is difficult or any property where labour shortages or inadequate facilities effective foot bathing.

The effective use of a vaccine can reduce the use of foot bathing and can therefore be very cost effective. The best control can be achieved with a combination of vaccination with foot bathing. Depending on the area, a further booster may be required after 10-12 weeks, if conditions are still suitable for footrot spread. If conditions are drying out, foot bathing weekly until conditions are dry may be sufficient. If pastures are likely to be green for more than 4-6 weeks a further vaccination may be justified. Discuss the most appropriate approach with your adviser.

In flocks where eradication is not possible due to the ongoing risk of stray sheep due to poor boundary fences or common grazing, vaccination may need to be continued on an annual basis during the spring spread period.

The recommended vaccination site is under the skin behind the ear to minimise carcass damage. Some vaccinated sheep may develop a reaction in response to vaccination with swelling appearing at the vaccination site and in some cases abscesses may develop. Follow Coopers recommendations for vaccination use. Note: Footvax is authorized for use in Victoria, South Australia and Tasmania. (Approval is required in NSW and WA)

Safe vaccination technique should be followed when using Footvax®. If self-vaccination does occur immediate medical care should be sought from your closest GP or hospital. Please contact Coopers Animals Health on 1800 226 511 for information if self-vaccination occurs.

When using the vaccine in South Australia, if a farm is wanting to get a status clearance through Department of Primary Industries and Regions, the vaccine must not be used within six months prior to the clearance inspection.

This information is provided by PIRSA for distribution by rural retailers to their customers who purchase Footvax® in South Australia.

References

1. Current approaches to the management of ovine footrot, Kim Abbott (2004)
2. Purdue, Footrot in Sheep and Goats
3. Lieardet et al (1989) Reduction of the prevalence of footrot on New Zealand farms with vaccination.



Government of South Australia
Department of Primary Industries
and Regions