



## PARAHEEL FOOTBATH TRIAL - 2007

18 sheep farms in Wales, England and Scotland were given Paraheel footbath solution to use as alternative to their regular solution as part of their normal lameness control routine. The farms ranged from Hill to Lowland and farmed a variety of breeds.

Of the 18 farms initially recruited, feedback from 16 was obtained. Feedback from the other 2 farms was not obtained due to one farm being unable to move stock due to Foot & Mouth restrictions and one farmer had not used the product sufficiently during the trial period to feel confident giving an informed opinion.

All the farms regularly ran their sheep through a footbath. Table 1 shows the usual interval between treatments.

Table 1 – Interval between footbathing

<i>Frequency of footbathing</i>	<i>Number of farms</i>
Approximately monthly	4
Quarterly	2
3 x times per year	1
Whenever brought in or as necessary	9

The products routinely used by the farms are shown in Table 2. Some farms used more than one product.

Table 2 – Normal footbath solutions used

<i>Product</i>	<i>Number of farms</i>
Formalin	14
Golden hoof	2
Lincospectin	3
Provita	1
Tylan	2
Zinc sulphate	2

The common causes of lameness on the farms included scald and footrot with 3 farms also having had Contagious Ovine Digital Dermatitis (CODD) in the past, although only one farm had cases of CODD at time of the trial.



## RESULTS

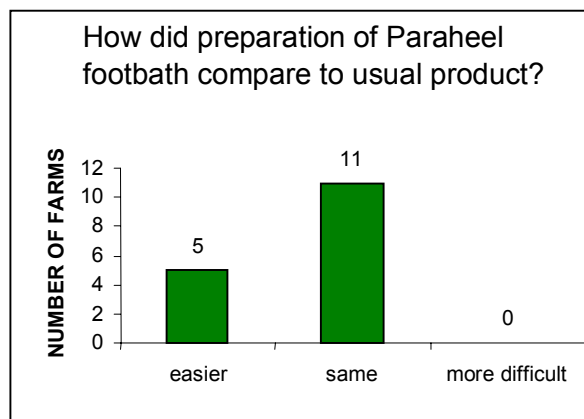
### a) Ease of use and handling

#### 1. Difficulty of mixing solution



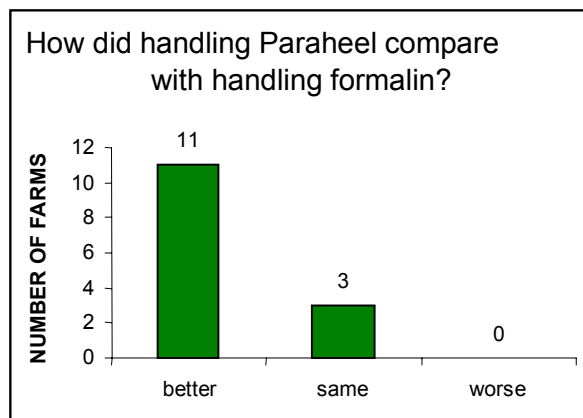
100% of farmers thought the product was easy to use

#### 2. Ease of mixing compared to other footbaths used



100% farmers found Paraheel either as easy or easier to prepare than other footbath solutions.

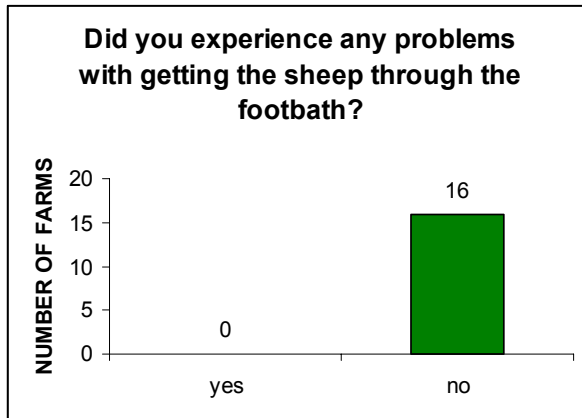
#### 3. Handling compared to formalin



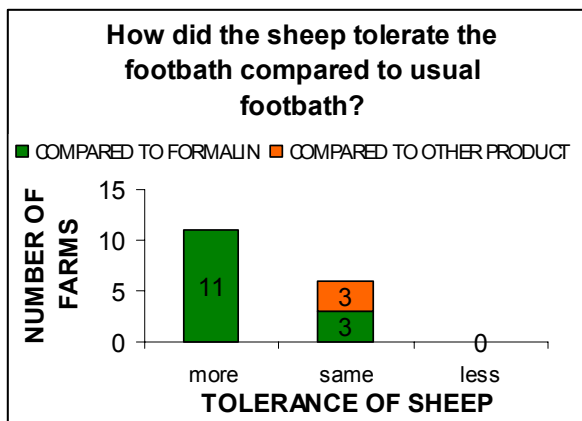
100% farmers who have used formalin found Paraheel more pleasant or the same as formalin to handle.  
79% found it more pleasant to use



#### 4. Sheep tolerance and ease of getting them through footbath



No farmers experienced any problems with sheep accepting Paraheel footbath.



100% farmers found Paraheel was tolerated by the sheep better or the same as other footbath products. 65% found sheep tolerated Paraheel better than all other products and 79% found sheep tolerated Paraheel better than formalin.

#### **b) Effectiveness**

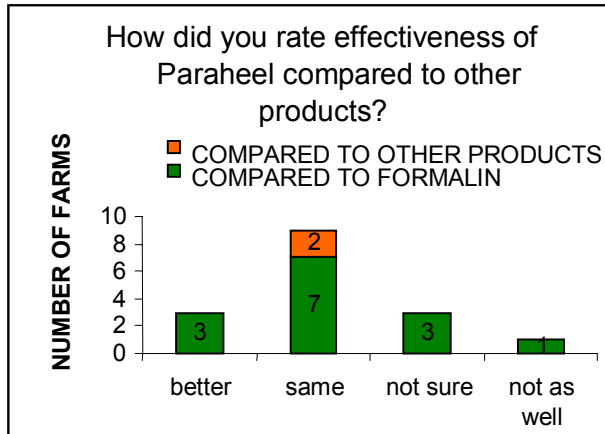
##### 1. Did Paraheel reduce lameness?



100% farmers thought Paraheel reduced lameness



2. How did it rate compared to other footbaths?



75% of farmers found Paraheel as good, if not better, than other footbath products. Those not sure felt they hadn't given the product sufficient time to assess its effectiveness yet. The farmer who thought it wasn't as effective as formalin had walked the sheep through the solution and felt that although it reduced severity it hadn't cleared as many lameness cases as he thought formalin might.

**c) Satisfaction with product**

1. Would you use the product again?



88% farmers would buy the product (depending on price!), 6% were happy to stick with formalin and 6% didn't know.



## SOME FEEDBACK FROM THE FARMERS ON THE TRIAL

### Feedback on handling solution:

- splashed some of concentrate on skin – it stung a bit but did not scar
- splashed some on skin to no effect, much nicer than formalin
- much nicer to handle than formalin
- more user friendly than formalin, it does smell but no worse than formalin
- nicer than formalin, its much safer
- nicer to handle than formalin, doesn't burn the skin
- fumes are a bit strong
- no problems with handling the solution at all
- it smells but doesn't make your eyes sting like formalin
- doesn't smell as bad or as strong as formalin
- got some of neat solution on hand – it turned the skin white for a day but didn't burn and skin was fine next day, better than formalin

### Feedback on sheep tolerance:

- sheep were happy to go through solution
- sheep don't jump and splash about as much as in formalin
- no problems at all with sheep going through
- sheep steadier going through than formalin, don't think it stung like formalin
- sheep reluctant to enter first time through but happy to go through after that so can't have hurt them
- just walked through quite happily
- sheep happier, not as agitated as with formalin
- better than formalin as sheep happy to go in bath once been through first time
- sheep go through more slowly than when rush in formalin
- better than formalin because sheep go through bath easier

### Feedback on ease of use:

- smaller volume to use as concentrate so easier to measure
- easier to calculate volume needed compared to formalin
- scale on container would make easier to measure
- 5L containers would be useful and easier to use
- easier to measure than zinc sulphate

### Feedback on effectiveness:

- as good as anything I've used before
- happy to use it as routine
- seemed to work better in the sheep I left standing in it for a few minutes
- didn't seem to have much effect on CODD but dried up scald well
- Just walked them through and they're all sound now!