

FOOTBATH CHEMICALS

1. **ZINC SULPHATE** at 1 kg per 10 litres in a run through footbath 4 - 8 metres in length is the preferred method. Footbath needs to be changed when it becomes heavily contaminated, as dirt can form a barrier to zinc sulphate contacting the sheep's feet. As Zinc Sulphate is a heavy metal, care must be taken with disposal of used footbath contents to avoid toxic residues contaminating water courses. I recommend the use of available concentration testers to ensure adequate strength in footbath. On most properties the use of tester reduces amount of Zinc Sulphate used by 50%.
2. **FORMALIN** 5% (1 litre per 20 litres) 200 litre drums are half the price of zinc sulphate but 20 litre drums of formalin are similar in price to zinc sulphate. Exposure to formalin fumes cause cancer in people so need to wear full protective gear and mask if working near footbath. A very irritant and caustic chemical and will aggravate skin wounds, so sheep with grass seed wounds between toes, or scabby leg may become lamer after footbathing.
3. **FOOTRITE** at 1 litre per litre of water is 10 times the price of ordinary zinc sulphate footbath. Sheep need to stand in bath for 60 minutes to achieve the extra benefit of footrite. A large footbath (expensive to build and fill with footrite) holding 50 sheep will do less sheep in 2 days than a run through footbath can do in less than an hour. Will not work if footbathed in previous 6 months with formalin.
4. **MEDOL** - No trial data published or any label claims, and is not registered for footbathing. Only lasts 14 days once mixed and presence of organic material reduces the efficacy of this class of disinfectants. Thus require far more frequent footbath changes with Medol than with zinc sulphate and this would counter any cost savings.
5. **RADICATE** - Costs around 50c per head, not aware of any robust trials comparing it with other foot bath treatments. I am not aware of any significant advantages over Zinc sulphate that would justify the very high cost.

Zinc sulphate and Formalin are antagonist in action, thus should avoid using both on the same mob in the same season and certainly not mix together.

Bush remedies such as adding wetting agent, arsenic, copper sulphate, and power kero are no better as contact disinfectant than straight zinc sulphate, **but are mostly dangerous or cause terrible residue problems.** One exception is adding Extinosid or Coopers Blowfly & Lice (*Ivermectin*) to zinc sulphate footbath when footbathing during fly weather especially when there is active scabby leg which is prone to fly strike Extinosid has to be mixed fresh each day, where as Ivermectin last 28 days after mixed

Above is a guide ALWAYS check current label recommendations carefully prior to use

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