

# Poultry Red Mite

A major parasite of laying hens worldwide



## Disease

- Poultry Red Mite (PRM) is a blood-feeding mite that lives in the cracks and crevices of poultry sheds, emerging at night to feed on the hens
- PRM has a worldwide distribution and affects layers kept in all types of housing systems
- When present in high numbers, PRM causes anaemia, hen welfare issues and a decrease in egg production
- PRM can survive months without feeding and are almost impossible to eradicate once a shed is infested

## Treatment and control

- Control is usually through applying pesticides to the housing but overuse of some pesticides has led to resistance in mite populations
- Alternative treatments (e.g. desiccant dusts, biopesticides and detergents) are becoming more popular but often require repeated application
- New long-lived and safe control methods e.g. vaccination, would be timely and desirable
- Moredun scientists are developing a high welfare method of testing vaccine effectiveness on PRM

