



MARKET ASSURANCE PROGRAMS
FOR JOHNE'S DISEASE

MAP

ALPACAMAP

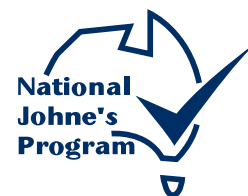
GOATMAP

CATTLEMAP

SHEEPMAP

DEERMAP

2006





MAP

WHAT ARE MARKET ASSURANCE PROGRAMS?

The Australian Johne's Disease Market Assurance Programs (MAPs) are a key strategy in the control of Johne's disease in Australia. MAPs are voluntary quality assurance programs to enable producers to objectively assess and promote the low risk Johne's disease status of their herd or flock to their clients. Sourcing replacement animals from MAP assessed herds or flocks minimises the spread of Johne's disease.

The following MAPs have been operating in Australia for several years:

AlpacaMAP

GoatMAP

CattleMAP

SheepMAP

A DeerMAP is under development.

MAPs provide breeders with a clear way of assuring clients that their herds or flocks have been assessed for Johne's disease in a way that is recognised nationally and that they are still being managed to protect them from Johne's disease.

MAPs are designed to:

- provide a pool of low-risk replacement animals for those herd and flock owners who want to avoid introducing infection, including properties restocking after an eradication program,
- allow individual flocks and herds in high prevalence areas to demonstrate their low-risk status so that they can sell replacement animals,
- facilitate the movement of low-risk animals between Zones.

In March 2005, there were over 1400 cattle herds and over 700 sheep flocks enrolled in MAPs. There were also about 70 herds in the GoatMAP and 170 alpaca herds in the AlpacaMAP.



GETTING STARTED

The first step in getting into a MAP is simple – contact your veterinarian. Ask if he or she is an approved veterinarian for the particular MAP in which you are interested. Over 800 veterinarians have been trained and approved for the Cattle, Sheep, Goat and AlpacaMAPs. They are listed on the Animal Health Australia website:

www.animalhealthaustralia.com.au

They can help you, discuss the program, draw up a written management plan and also test your herd or flock. If your veterinarian is not approved, ask him/her to consider doing so, or ask them to recommend a veterinarian who is approved.

Testing cattle involves taking blood samples from up to 300 adult cattle and screening for antibodies to Johne's disease with the absorbed ELISA test. These results take about a week to come through. If any samples react to the test, the animals need to be followed up to determine if they are infected.

Sheep can be tested by a blood test of up to 875 sheep or by pooled faecal culture of at least 7 pools of dung pellets, each from 50 sheep. In both cases, follow-up is carried out to check if any reactions are true positive results. Pooled faecal culture is cheaper than blood testing but both the initial results and follow-up of any positive pools can take several months.

Once a herd or flock is tested negative it gains a Monitored Negative 1 (MN 1) status. To retain this status, the property must continue to comply with the management and testing requirements of the MAP. This is audited annually by the approved veterinarian to confirm that the owner is managing the herd or flock according to the program and the agreed management plan.

Herds that qualify for a status credit through *Beef Only* or *Q-Alpaca* can gain an MN2 status once they enter the MAP.

A FINAL THOUGHT

Why should producers continue to run the risk of buying Johne's disease? Remember, Non-Assessed status gives no assurance.

If breeders want to sell into markets or to clients who want a high level of assurance on Johne's disease, a MAP is the answer. Over two thousand producers have shown the way and have assessed the status of their herds or flocks.

Look for them on the web at:
<http://www.aahc.com.au/APAV/userinterface/home.aspx>

These herds and flocks have a certificate of their status from their approved veterinarian. They are entitled to promote their status using the MAP logo in their sale catalogues and advertisements, and on signs and ear tags.

Support these assessed herds and flocks breeders won't necessarily enter a MAP unless their clients encourage them.

NEW MANUALS

The new flexibility in the MAPs means that the owner must manage risks and more carefully plan the herd or flock management with his or her approved veterinarian.

The owner will take on most of the running. The approved veterinarian's main roles will be to give professional advice on potential risks and their management, to see that the program is being followed and to undertake testing, investigations and annual audits.

In 2000, new Cattle and SheepMAP manuals were released which were similar in approach and layout to the CattleCare/FlockCare manual.

The new manuals were developed to help improve risk management and record keeping and facilitate auditing. There are explanations of why things are done, details of what exactly has to be done, and guides to the records that need to be kept.

There are also forms that you can use to record or check compliance with the program, help develop herd and flock management plans and so on.

Animal Health Australia is currently revising the manuals to make them much simpler to follow and implement.



**BECOME ... AND BUY FROM
... A MAP ASSESSED HERD OR FLOCK**

MAP



WHY DO WE NEED MAPS?

Johne's disease has a long incubation period, usually of several years. Most infected animals do not show the typical signs of the disease during their lifetimes, even though they may be shedding large numbers of the bacteria and infecting other animals. A Non-Assessed (NA) status in regions where Johne's disease occurs means that the herd or flock has not been adequately assessed for Johne's disease. It really means that we just don't know what the true disease situation is in that herd or flock. The once common certification that "Johne's disease is not known or suspected to occur in this herd or flock" is of little value on its own.

In the absence of an objective assessment, like the MAP, vendors can give little assurance about the Johne's disease status of their animals. A vendor may have no idea that his or her herd or flock is infected and may continue to sell bulls and heifers, and rams and ewes, putting clients at risk of joining the lists of Johne's disease-infected properties!

Complementary assurance schemes have been developed for sheep and dairy herds. These are not just for tested negative herds and flocks but also provide pathways for known infected and un-tested herds to progress.

Current tests have a low ability to detect individual infected animals, especially when they are young or have only been recently infected. Most replacement animals are bought when they are young, so testing them at that time gives very little confidence that they are not infected. That is why the MAPs rely on repeat testing of large numbers of adult animals.

Herds or flocks participating in the MAPs are tested to determine their Johne's disease status and are managed to reduce the risk of them becoming infected. Over four years, these herds or flocks are able to progress from Monitored Negative 1 (MN1) through to Monitored Negative 3 (MN3) status – the highest level of assurance.

WHY BE CONCERNED ABOUT JOHNE'S DISEASE?

Johne's disease has been slowly spreading in Australia for decades, especially in the south-east of the country. In 2003, ovine Johne's disease was found to have spread to Western Australia. Increasing numbers of herds and flocks have been infected by unwittingly introducing infected animals. Surveillance is underway to get a better estimate of the extent of the problem.

WHAT DOES A MAP STATUS MEAN?

MAPs are designed to give increasing assurance that assessed herds or flocks are not infected with Johne's disease. The assurance that assessed herds and flocks have a low risk of being infected comes from repeated negative testing of all adult animals, or a sample of them, together with a management plan to reduce the risk of introducing Johne's disease.

In the SheepMAP, vaccination can also be used for greater protection and assurance and flocks can now maintain their status by vaccinating in place of flock testing.

The longer the time that a herd or flock participates in the program and achieves higher Monitored Negative (MN) status, the greater the level of confidence that it is not infected. Herds and flocks can progress through a series of MN status, with the first being MN1 after one negative test. MN2 and MN3 status can be achieved following further negative sample tests at a minimum of two-year intervals.

Terms such as "accredited free" or "confirmed free" are not used in the MAPs as this would wrongly imply that there is a nil risk associated with purchase of animals from Monitored Negative herds or flocks.



...THE AUSTRALIAN JOHNE'S DISEASE MARKET ASSURANCE



WHY BE IN IT?

Demands for assurance are becoming more common as livestock breeders realise the risk they run from Johne's disease, and that Non-Assessed status really gives little or no assurance. In fact, depending on the area prevalence and number of animals introduced, the chance of buying infected animals from Non-Assessed herds and flocks can be high.

If you are managing to *Beef Only* standards, managing calf rearing in a dairy herd, as part of a quality assurance program, or vaccinating a sheep flock then a MAP status will provide even greater assurance.

Cattle breed societies have signalled their support for assessed herds. For several years, the Australian Registered Cattle Breeders Association and Beef Improvement Association have required declaration of a herd's Johne's status under their Seedstock Code of Practice. An assessed MAP status is the preferred means of doing this.

While the direct economic losses on production are relatively low in most infected herds and flocks, they can become severe if not controlled. Taking precautions to keep infection out of breeding herds and flocks should be a high priority for all producers.

Producers selling replacement stock from known infected flocks or herds may be excluded from their traditional markets.

SHOULD ALL LIVESTOCK PRODUCERS BE IN THE MAP?

MAPs are open to anyone but they are mainly for livestock producers who sell replacement breeding stock to buyers who want low-risk stock. Owners wishing to assure the Johne's disease status of land that they plan to sell, or who want to rear or attract low-risk stock for agistment, should also consider enrolling in the MAP and assessing their herd or flock currently running on the land.

As complying with the management requirements is an essential aspect of the MAPs, it is important that owners wanting to enrol, fully understand them.

WHAT IF MY HERD OR FLOCK IS INFECTED?

If your herd or flock is found to be already infected, it could have a significant impact on your business. The complementary assurance schemes, such as the *Dairy BJD Assurance Score* and the *ABC Scheme* for sheep flocks, provide pathways for infected herds and flocks to progress through managing the infection on their farms. Some States have assistance for control programs in infected herd and flock and, in 2004, the Cattle Council of Australia also initiated a scheme to assist owners of infected beef herds. Substantial financial assistance is available to herds that implement a program to eradicate the infection.

A BJD Counsellor or your local district veterinary officer can discuss what is required with you.

Information about the National BJD Financial and Non Financial Assistance for beef cattle herds may be obtained from the Animal Health Australia website.

WHAT ARE THE COSTS INVOLVED?

The main outlays are the costs of testing and managing the herd or flock to comply with the program.

The up-front cost of developing a CattleMAP management plan with an approved veterinarian including blood testing the herd is about \$10 per head tested. Cattle Council currently provides beef herds a \$300 rebate on CattleMAP testing costs. The initial costs of enrolling in the SheepMAP may vary between \$1000 and \$5000, largely depending on whether pooled faecal culture or individual blood testing is used to test the flock. In some States there may be additional assistance with testing costs.

For more information contact your approved veterinarian or State coordinator.

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MAP

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