Tasmanian Livestock Health Report – March 2024

The Tasmanian Livestock Health Report summarises information on livestock diseases and conditions observed by rural service providers across Tasmania.

See www.animalhealthaustralia.com.au/tas-health for previous reports and to register for a free email subscription, or join the Tasmanian Livestock Health Facebook group

Funding is provided by Animal Health Australia (with support from Sheep Producers Australia and WoolProducers Australia) and by NRE. Private veterinarians coordinate the project.

You are welcome to distribute this report to anyone you like. The next Tasmanian Livestock Health Report will be out in mid-May.

If you need more information on this project, please contact Bruce Jackson on 0407 872 520 or rja69392@bigpond.net.au

Also see the Resources section at the end of this report.

Seasonal Disease Alerts

Acute bovine liver disease (ABLD): use sheep now to graze off paddocks that have a lot of mature rough dog's tail weed, so that cattle can graze safely later in autumn.
Barber's pole worm: are still a high risk on irrigation and even on dryland in some areas.
Black scour worms: high egg counts are still being seen. Monthly worm egg counts on weaner sheep would be worth doing, but if you only do one test, do it 3 weeks after the autumn break.
Brown stomach worm: is a summer worm, and some near pure infestations have been reported. They are often resistant to drenches so do a DrenchCheck or Drenchtest if egg counts are 100 epg or more soon after a drench.
Campylobacter abortion in sheep: vaccine course or booster should be completed before joining but you can vaccinate ewe lambs/maidens as rams go in and come out and boost mixed age ewes as rams go in or out.
DrenchTest: Autumn is the best time to do a DrenchTest as all major worm species are more likely to be present. Draft off 150 lambs and do regular worm egg counts. When over 400 epg, have a larval identification done to make sure enough of each major worm species is present.
Facial eczema: can be seen on irrigated ryegrass pastures but less likely from now on.
Flystrike: Flies still active now. A test kit and free testing is available if you suspect chemical resistance.
Liver fluke: Eggs can be present in Fluketests now, but blood tests are the best way to detect migrating fluke in live animals.

Lucerne red gut: seen as sudden death with a very bloated carcase on irrigated lucerne or clover. Offering roughage such as hay or straw or alternating between pasture and the lucerne/clover can help prevent cases.
Nematodirus: are still active in weaners. Scouring, sub-optimal growth rates, some Nematodirus eggs in the egg count justify a drench.
Pleurisy: is showing up in abattoir reports, slowing prime lamb growth rates and resulting in trimming at the abattoir. Check MLA's myFeedback to see if there is any data on your lambs processed this season.
Pulpy kidney: Make sure lambs get a booster if going onto rich feed such as clover or lucerne and into feedlots or droughtlots.
Ryegrass staggers: Active now. Graze off paddocks with a history of staggers with older animals, run weaners on safer pastures.

Biosecurity story of the month – Avian influenza found in cattle and a farm worker in the USA

Highly pathogenic avian influenza ('bird flu') H5N1 has created havoc in the poultry industry around the world, with the current outbreak starting in 2020. In 2022 over 131 million domestic poultry died or were culled in 67 countries. So far Australia has been free of this deadly disease.

The latest incident involved dairy cattle in the USA that suffered a drop in milk production. A dead farm cat and pigeons led to a diagnosis of avian flu. Fifteen other dairy farms in different states of the USA, all linked to wild birds, have also been found to have avian flu affecting their dairy cows. Authorities are not yet sure whether the flu virus is spreading from cow to cow.

A farmworker milking cows in one of the infected herds has also been tested positive for avian flu and had conjunctivitis but is recovering. Avian flu is rare in man but about 50% of cases (with the H5N1 strain) have died in the past.

During this outbreak avian flu has been found in many species of wild bird and has also killed a lot of mammals such as foxes, seals, porpoises, bottlenose dolphins and grizzly bears. It has now reached Antarctica (via South America) and it seems only a matter of time before it reaches Australia. Tasmania is closer to Antarctica than the rest of Australia and we all need to be aware of the risk.

If you see a lot of sick or dying wild birds, or if your own poultry die suddenly or become ill with respiratory and nervous signs, call your vet or the EAD hotline on 1800 675 888.

It is unlikely that farm livestock will become ill unless they have been exposed to infected wild birds, but if you see anything odd in any species, wild or domestic, it is best to talk to your vet or call 1800 675 888.

eID NLIS tags for sheep and goats

All sheep, lambs and goats leaving a property after 1January 2025 will need to be identified with National Livestock Identification System (NLIS) ear tags (or leg bands for some goats) containing an electronically readable microchip (NLIS eID).

This is part of a national plan to make sure that our sheep industry is prepared for any possible outbreak of an emergency animal disease such as foot and mouth disease (FMD), which is now present in Indonesia.

Australia is free of emergency animal diseases such as FMD, sheep pox and goat pox. Our sheep industry is heavily dependant on exports of wool and sheepmeats, even a small outbreak anywhere in Australia would close these markets for many months.

Controlling animal movements and tracking down animals that have been in contact with infected animals and objects (called “tracing”), are essential parts of the response to an outbreak. The faster tracing can be done, the sooner the outbreak is contained and the sooner we regain access to our export markets.

Up until now, we have tried to use ‘mob-based’ recording of sheep movements in preparation for the need to trace sheep, lambs and goats. However, when the system has been tested in exercises it has taken days to trace the in-contact sheep and some could not be found at all. This is just not good enough.

If we do have an outbreak of a serious disease, we need a tracing system that allows rapid and complete tracing. Electronic NLIS sheep and goat tags will allow that to happen.

Subsidies are now available for supply chain businesses such as saleyards, livestock transporters and processors to purchase the hardware and software they need. From 1 July producers will be eligible to apply for subsidies to purchase tags and readers as well.

We don’t need any extra costs right now, but we just have to bite the bullet and get this system in place as an insurance against more catastrophic losses if a disease such as FMD does enter Australia.

For more information see: https://nre.tas.gov.au/agriculture/multifaceted-agriculture/animal-industries/identifying-selling-moving-livestock/sheep-and-goat-electronic-identification

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Diseases and conditions seen in March 2024

SHEEP				
Disease/condition	**Number of reports/ cases**	**Region**	**Details**	**Prevention, treatment, and other biosecurity advice or measures**
Acidosis (grain poisoning)	Widespread, mostly small numbers	Southern Tasmania	Shy feeders that suddenly come onto grain, starting off with too much grain or accidental access to grain stores or spills are most common causes.	Found dead, or sick with "porridge" scour. Take off grain source and feed roughage. Oral penicillin under veterinary supervision may help. Take just as long to transition to a new grain or concentrate as you do starting them on grain. Draft shy feeders off into their own pen or offer non-grain feed.
Anaemia, swollen lips and low body condition score	One ewe lamb on one medium property	Southern Tasmania	Condition appeared to be chronic	Could be barber's pole worms, copper or cobalt deficiency, blood parasites, liver fluke. But this was the only case in the mob and a chronic infection was suspected. Diagnostic testing may identify the cause and allow specific treatment.
Anoestrus (not showing signs of 'coming into heat') in ewe lambs	One mob of ewe lambs in one medium flock	Southern Tasmania	No mating activity when rams mixed with over 200 ewe lambs.	Ewe lambs were all over 40 kg, ewes should have been cycling. Sometimes maidens do not start cycling until ram contact occurs, so using teasers for 10 days before the rams are joined or extending joining for an additional 10 days may be worthwhile.
Arthritis, degenerative	One aged ewe in each of two medium flocks	Northern and Southern Tasmania	Aged ewe lame with swollen shoulder or stifle joint that could not bend.	One ewe was in good condition and still rearing good lambs. The joint was unable to bend but did not appear painful so the ewe was allowed to remain in the flock with no treatment. Other ewe very lame and low body condition score so euthansed on farm because non-weight bearing on affected leg and not fit to load.
Arthritis, infectious	Seen in one lamb in one medium flock	Southern Tasmania	Seen as lameness and swollen joints. Whole leg will usually be removed at slaughter, often making carcase worthless or dropping it into a lower price grade on the grid.	Removing tails at the third joint (level with tip of vulva in ewe lambs) at marking prevents many cases. Make sure orphan lambs receive sufficient colostrum within 24 hours of birth. Early antibiotic treatment of lame lambs may work. If Erysipelas is diagnosed in the flock then use Erysipelas vaccine. See fact sheet on: https://sheepconnecttas.com.au/disease-factsheets/
Ataxia (unsteady gait)	One poddy lamb in one small flock	Southern Tasmania	Sudden onset. History of broken bones earlier.	Spinal abscess, white muscle disease, spinal fracture due to copper deficiency or calcium: phosphorus: vitamin D imbalance are all possible causes. This one responded to anti-inflammatory and antibiotic treatment by veterinarian so probably an abscess.
Barbers pole worm	Widespread deaths in lambs and adults	NW, Northern & Southern Tasmania, both dryland and irrigation.	Sudden death, no scouring, pale gums, lethargy. High worm egg counts and larval ID showing mainly barbers pole worms.	Some massive counts of up to 200,000 epg seen this month. See WORMBOSS website for details on diagnosis, control and prevention programs.
Black scour worm	Widespread, sometimes in combination with other	NW, Northern and Southern Tasmania	High worm egg count, but high % Trichostrongyl	Black scour worm usually a winter parasite but a series of wet years and cool summers has allowed it to continue to dominate in some areas. See WORMBOSS web site for good treatment and prevention strategies.

	worm species.		us identified by larval culture at lab.	
Body condition score low	Several lambs in one small flock	Northern Tasmania	Body condition less than BCS 2	Usually not enough feed. Worms, fluke, and specific deficiencies (copper, selenium, B12) and diseases eg footrot may also be involved.
Brown stomach worm	One medium flock	NW Tasmania	Scouring, high worm egg count and 96% brown stomach worm identified by larval differentiation test at lab.	See WORMBOSS web site for good treatment and prevention strategies. Brown stomach worm more common in summer and are poor egg producers so egg counts not always really high. May be resistant to different drenches compared to Black Scour Worm, our main winter parasite, so drench resistance tests may give very different results in summer vs winter in the same flock.
Bruising	Seen in 0.02% of lambs at the abattoir	NW, Northern and Southern Tasmania	Bruising limits market destinations for affected carcasses	Handle sheep calmly and quietly. Make sure there are no projections in the yards.
Campylobacter abortion	A number of large flocks diagnosed in retrospect by serology. One flock lost 33% of scanned pregnancies.	Northern and Southern Tasmania	There are two types of Campylobacter that cause abortion, most of these outbreaks caused by the "fetus" strain.	Ewes in drought lots, fed on grain trails or in intensive rotational grazing systems during pregnancy are particularly at risk. A vaccine is available and covers both strains. The course should ideally be completed before joining although vaccinating as the rams go in and a booster for maidens as the rams come back out is effective too. Humans can also be affected so women of child-bearing age should not be exposed to aborting ewes or afterbirth.
Cysticercosis ("bladder worm")	Detected at abattoir in 0.4% of lamb carcases.	NW Southern and Northern Tasmania.	Seen as small clear bags of fluid attached to liver or elsewhere in abdominal cavity of sheep at abattoir. Causes liver to be trimmed or condemned. Spread by a dog tapeworm.	Prevented by stopping dogs from eating sheep offal and/or by treating all dogs including pets with a wormer containing praziquantel every 30 days. Visiting dogs (contractors, shooters) must be treated at least 2 days before arrival on property. Keep stray dogs off the property. These measures also prevent sheep measles and hydatids. See fact sheet on: https://sheepconnecttas.com.au/disease-factsheets/
Cellulitis (infection) under jaw	One lamb in one flock	Southern Tasmania	Skin injury under jaw possibly from grazing through a fence, swollen, pus dripping from wound.	Antibiotics anti-inflammatories and good nursing under veterinary supervision may effect a cure.
Cough, hacking, persistent	Several lambs in one medium flocks. Nasal discharge not seen.	Southern Tasmania	Lambs cough, little response to lungworm drench	If little response to lungworm drench, then probably an infection. May be virus, or bacteria such as Mycoplasma. Use antibiotics under veterinary supervision if production loss/deaths occur and postmortem indicates bacterial involvement.
Dags	Wide-spread but mainly in a small proportion of sheep.	NW, Northern and Southern Tasmania	Due to scouring.	May be due to worms, gut infection (eg Salmonella, Yersinia, coccidia), nutritional factors. Have a WORMTEST egg count done and ask the laboratory to check for coccidia, culture for Yersinia and Salmonella if egg counts are low. Check paddock for plants such as capeweed. Crutch. The Dealing with Dag Advisor Manual is available at www.wool.com/flystrikelatest.

Deaths in adult sheep	A number of deaths on a number of farms	Southern Tasmania	Multiple causes associated with worms, feeding problems, other causes	If more than the odd sheep dies it may be worth having post mortems carried out to diagnose cause/s so that appropriate treatment and prevention can be given. Often these post mortems detect significant problems affecting productivity of the whole mob.
Drench resistant worms	One medium flock	NW Tasmania	Black scour worm egg counts not reduced by more than 95% 10-14 days after drenching	See WORMBOSS for strategies to manage and prevent drench resistance.
Ear cancer	Two sheep in two medium flocks	Northern & Southern Tasmania.	Ulcerated mass on ear.	Older sheep with white ears without much wool cover. Cull as soon as noticed. Can be treated surgically by a veterinarian. Can spread to glands draining that area so check parotid lymph node before performing surgery.
Flystrike	Widespread. Body strike pizzle strike, shoulder strike as well as breech.	NW, N and Southern Tasmania	Breech, body, shoulder, poll strike in rams, pizzle strike in wethers. Foot strike (secondary to footrot or foot abscess). Sheep with footrot struck over ribs from lying on infected foot.	Observe for damp, grey areas of wool, tail flicking, separation from mob, lying down. The AWI web site has a large number of resources and runs workshops on flystrike. See: https://www.wool.com/simplifly. Use preventative treatments or examine every 2 days and treat as soon as found. Destroy maggots.
Footrot, virulent	Several large properties	Southern, Northern Tasmania	Low % on dryland. Some eradication programs progressing well.	Eradication inspections continuing now in most areas and some good cure rates from footbathing and vaccinating have been seen. Footbathing and vaccination, paring, culling "chronics" that don't respond to treatment are on-going strategies. Long acting oxytetracycline antibiotics under veterinary supervision is useful to treat chronic cases now and if conditions stay dry. Prevention: Ask for a Sheep Health Declaration when buying sheep and ensure section B1 confirms flock is free of virulent footrot but still footbath, quarantine and check feet on arrival. Footbath sheep returning from shows. Maintain good boundary fence. See Ute Guide for Tasmania: https://www.wool.com/globalassets/wool/sheep/welfare/other-husbandry/footrot--a-guide-to-identification-and-control-in-the-field---tas-2019.pdf
Hooves overgrown	A number of ewes in several small and large flocks.	NW & Northern Tasmania	Toe of hoof very long, can curl up. Soft ground, scald and footrot can be underlying cause.	Regular trimming. Control scald /footrot if present.
Horn broken	One sheep in one medium flock	Northern Tasmania	Horn broken close to head.	Remove broken horn. Bleeds but usually heals quickly, Spray with antiseptic. Prevent fly strike and allow time to recover.
Horn growing into head (in-grown horn)	Two wethers in one small mob.	Northern Tasmania	Horn has grown into and damaged the skin.	May result in animal welfare penalties. Horns must be trimmed on-farm. Ask your vet for some embryotomy wire as it allows horn to be removed safely. Prevention: Dehorn lambs so that a margin of haired skin is removed with horn.

Hump-back spinal deformity	One ewe lamb in one medium flock	Southern Tasmania	Lamb born this way (congenital) otherwise healthy	No action needed. Best not to breed for such animals.
Lameness	A number of sheep in a number of mobs	Northern Tasmania	Reluctant to bear full weight on at least one foot.	Could be footrot, scald, foot abscess, scabby mouth of feet, injuries, toe abscess, laminitis, standing on concrete surfaces too long. Identify cause and treat accordingly.
Laminitis in rams on grain	20% of rams in one large flock	Northern Tasmania	Reluctant to walk, hind legs affected most.	Take off grain, offer hay. Treat with antihistamines if possible. Re-introduce grain slowly.
Large bowel worm (Oesophagostomum)	One large flock	Southern Tasmania	Heavy worm burden associated with scour, loss of condition. Often seen combined with other worm species.	See WORMBOSS for treating and preventing large bowel worm
Lice (body lice)	Widespread	Southern Tasmania.	Sheep body lice cause fleece damage. Check for 2mm long insects with broad reddish head moving slowly away from light by parting wool 10 times down each side of 10 sheep.	See LICEBOSS: http://www.liceboss.com.au/sheep-goats/ for a full practical guide to managing and preventing sheep body lice. Use Sheep Health Declaration when buying sheep.
Liver fluke	Detected at laboratory in about half of samples submitted.	Northern and Southern Tasmania	Abattoir detection, farm post mortem or Fluke eggs found in FLUKETEST on manure samples sent to laboratory. Bottle jaw, anaemia, weight loss and deaths from heavy infestation.	Most fluke are adult stage in bile ducts in liver at this time of year but pickup of immatures will be continuing until July. Triclabendazole best treatment from November to June as it kills immature fluke as well as mature fluke. See fact sheet on https://sheepconnecttas.com.au/disease-factsheets/
Nasal discharge, snotty, both nostrils, some with cough	A number of lambs in a number of flocks but also one mob of British Breed ewes.	NW, Northern & Southern Tasmania	Can be due to viral or bacterial infections or nasal bots.	If sheep are bright and alert no action required. If depressed, laboured breathing, deaths, veterinary advice should be sought.
Nematodirus	Widespread in weaners	NW, Northern and Southern Tasmania	Weaners scour and have lowered growth rates. Nematodirus egg counts may or may not be high.	Nematodirus egg counts often do not reflect adult worm burden inside the weaners. Autopsy and total worm count or treat and look for response. See WORMBOSS web site for details on control.

Ocular (eye) discharge, clear, one eye	One weaner from one large flock	Northern Tasmania	Usually due to a foreign body, most likely barley grass seed.	Control barley grass with intensive rotational grazing, herbicide or topping. Foreign bodies, grass seeds should be removed from eye as soon as possible and an eye ointment or spray administered.
Ocular (eye) discharge, purulent, one eye	One weaner from one large flock	Northern Tasmania	Most likely barley grass seed.	Control barley grass with intensive rotational grazing, herbicide or topping. Grass seeds should be removed from eye as soon as possible and an eye ointment or spray administered.
Pasteurellosis	One ewe died and several affected in one medium flock	Northern Tasmania	One ewe found dead and some down or sick a day or two after a surgical procedure.	Acute pneumonia due to Pasteurella was diagnosed from postmortem specimens. The bacteria may have spread during yarding and shedding and the stress of the procedure may have also been a factor.
Pink eye	Widespread	Southern Tasmania	Discharge down cheeks, white areas on cornea of eye. Usually spread by flies, long grass and close contact (eg yarding), hay in racks.	If low prevalence and on good feed and water leave alone to self-heal as mustering can increase spread within mob. Treat with antibiotic injections under veterinary supervision. Eye ointments/sprays less effective.
Photosensitisation	A number of lambs in one medium flock	Northern Tasmania	Skin peels off face and ears.	Blood sample for liver damage check, spore count pasture for Pithomyces (Facial Eczema) spores, check water for blue-green algae, poisonous plants and pigment plants (eg storksbill, medics). Treat with anti-inflammatories only if liver not damaged, antibiotics if necessary, under veterinary supervision, offer deep shade, move to new paddock.
Pleurisy	Detected at abattoir in 1.5% of lamb carcases.	NW, Southern and Northern Tasmania	Lungs stuck to chest wall. Usually results in major trimming.	Treat sick sheep with cough or respiratory distress with antibiotics. Try to avoid stress events, drench sheep carefully, avoid dusty feedstuffs.
Proud flesh in toe	One ram in one small mob.	Northern Tasmania	Lame, hoof horn broken off at toe, proud flesh in defect.	Underlying conditions such as footrot must be treated. Proud flesh can be sliced off and a pressure bandage applied to reduce bleeding.
Runts	A small number of lambs from three small flock	Northern Tasmania	Stunted lambs that are unlikely to grow out. May have been orphaned or suffered from illness.	Best euthanased but can try high protein/high energy feed (introduce slowly).
Ryegrass staggers	A number of weaner sheep in two large flocks	Southern Tasmania	Usually young sheep - tremors, abnormal gait, may become downers, may convulse when disturbed. Often seek water and drown in dams. Can have high mortality.	See https://dpipwe.tas.gov.au/biosecurity-tasmania/animal-biosecurity/animal-health/sheep/perennial-ryegrass-staggers for details on diagnosis treatment and prevention.

Sarcosporidia ("Sarco")	Detected at abattoir in 1% of lamb & hogget carcasses.	NW, Southern and Northern Tasmania	Small 'rice grain' whitish raised lesions on outside of food pipe (oesophagus), diaphragm and in skeletal muscles. Carcase trimmed or condemned.	Spread by cats. Takes a long time to grow so not usually seen in young lambs. Deny cats access to sheep meat, burn or bury carcasses promptly, eradicate feral cats over large area. See fact sheet on: https://sheepconnecttas.com.au/disease-factsheets/
Scald	One ewe lamb in one medium flock	Southern Tasmania	Score 1 and 2 lesions (less than 2mm under-running of hoof horn at heel)	Also called benign footrot but can be due to Ovine Interdigital Dermatitis (OID) as well. Re-check in 14 days to ensure not progressing to virulent footrot. Usually responds to footbathing and dry conditions underfoot. This one culled as part of an eradication program and the only one affected in the mob which had been footbathed a number of times.
Scour in prime lambs on irrigation	10% of lambs in one large mob	Southern Tasmania	Can be due to worms, coccidia, Cryptosporidia, Giardia, E coli bacterial gut infection, nutritional factors.	Worms most common cause. WORMTEST or drench and see if they respond. Check for sudden diet change to lush feed, plants such as capeweed. May need veterinary involvement if growth rates are low.
Sheep measles	Detected at abattoir in 3.7% of lamb carcasses.	Northern and Southern Tasmania	Small whitish mass about half the size of a 5-cent piece protruding from the muscle of the heart, diaphragm or skeletal muscle. Carcase is trimmed, or condemned if too many to trim.	This is the intermediate stage of a dog tapeworm. Prevented by stopping dogs from eating raw sheep meat. Freeze sheep carcase meat for 2 weeks before feeding to dogs, burn/bury sheep carcases promptly and treat all dogs including pets with a wormer containing praziquantel every 30 days. Visiting dogs (contractors, shooters) must be treated 2 days before arrival on property. Keep stray dogs off the property. See fact sheet on https://sheepconnecttas.com.au/disease-factsheets/
Swayback (delayed)	A number of lambs each year from marking to 8 months of age in one large flock.	Northern Tasmania	Lambs in good condition lose control of hind legs and go down. Mainly when stressed.	Copper deficiency diagnosed by testing liver samples from affected lambs. Typical microscopic changes also seen in sections of spinal cord. Ewes can be injected with copper pre-lambing or copper can be added to fertiliser applied to lambing paddocks and weaner paddocks while sheep are not present and are not returned until copper has been washed into soil by rain or irrigation. Only use one method of supplementation, copper accumulates easily in sheep and chronic copper poisoning can result in significant deaths.
Vaccination lesions	A small number of ewes in one medium flock and 0.2% of lambs at the abattoir.	Northern and Southern Tasmania	The ewes were vaccinated under the skin of the upper neck but still resulted in large lesions (British Breed ewes)	Extra care must be taken with oil-based vaccines such as Campvax and Gudair as large lumps often result. Vaccinate under the skin high on the **side** of the neck. Never vaccinate into the muscle. For details see: https://www.zoetis.com.au/livestock-solutions/pdfs/zoetis_gudair-product-information-2018.pdf

Wart	One ram from one large flock	Northern Tasmania	Crusty growth on haired skin of face.	Best to leave alone, usually self-heal. Wart cream may work otherwise vet can remove surgically under local anaesthetic.
Water deprivation	Some lamb deaths in one large flock	Northern Tasmania	Trough problem not detected for a week.	If sheep or cattle are deprived of water for a long period they can suffer from "salt poisoning" when they do get access to water and drink a large quantity at once. Nervous signs and deaths can result. Best to give limited amounts of water with 9 kg of salt (eg pool salt) per 1000L of water in stages until thirst is satisfied.
Wool blind	One sheep in one medium flock	Northern Tasmania	Muffly faced sheep with wool totally obscuring vision.	Wig the sheep more often. Breed for open-faced sheep.
Worms	Widespread	NW, Northern and Southern Tasmania.	Moderate to high faecal egg count. Some high enough to be barbers pole worm.	Differentiate from nutritional scour or coccidia by WORMTEST. Use effective drench. Check that drench is working by repeating egg count 10-14 days later. Try to plan 'clean' paddocks for weaned lambs and pre-lamb drenched ewes. See WORMBOSS at: http://www.wormboss.com.au/sheep-goats/programs/sheep.php
CATTLE				
"Bottle" teats	One cow from one large herd	Northern Tasmania	Teats too large for calf to get into mouth resulting in calf loss soon after birth or mastitis in front quarters if calf can only suck back quarters.	Check cows at weaning and cull.
Brown-red flecks in sparce faeces in an adult cow	One cow from one large herd	Northern Tasmania	Could be bleeding from lower bowel or something indigestible that the cow ate, or possibly after rectal examination.	Keep under observation unless other symptoms show up.
Corkscrew claw	One bull in one herd	Northern Tasmania	Outside claw on hind or fore foot grows up off ground in corkscrew form	Genetic cause. Cull.
Corneal scarring	Two cows in one medium herd	Northern Tasmania	White irregular marks on cornea (front of eye) but no inflammation or discharge.	No action required. Be aware cow will have limited vision on that side when handling.
Dags	All weaner cattle in one small herd	Northern Tasmania	Faeces stuck on tail hair.	Due to scouring. Worms, dietary factors, bacterial and viral diseases all possible. Treat for worms first and look for a response.
Eye cancer in Hereford cow.	One case in one herd	Northern Tasmania	Growth or ulceration of eye or eyelid. More common in breeds with	Very early growths can be frozen, burnt (electrocautery) or scraped off. More advanced require surgery. Severe require euthanasia. Don't transport if cow can't close eyelid over the growth.

			white pigmentation around eye.	
Hair loss, circular, back of upper hind legs in a Jersey cow	One cow in one large herd	Northern Tasmania	May be the start of chorioptic mange or injury.	This one probably a rub injury from loading or transport. Skin scrapings may be worth taking if seen as a problem worth investigating.
Nasal discharge, purulent (snotty) one side only	One steer in one large herd	Northern Tasmania	Could be caused by a foreign body up that nostril	Best to examine in a crush and remove any foreign body. If no object can be found and animal is otherwise bright and alert, just keep under observation. If any other signs of ill-health use antibiotics under veterinary supervision.
Ocular (eye) discharge (clear, watery) both eyes	A small number of cattle in a number of herds.	NW, Northern and Southern Tasmania	Usually caused by an irritant such as pollen, dust etc but can be first stage of Pink Eye.	May not be possible to remove from irritants. Observe again later to make sure Pink Eye is not developing.
Ocular (eye) discharge (clear, watery) only one eye	A small number of cattle in a number of herds.	NW, Northern Tasmania	Usually, an injury or foreign body such as grass seeds, but can also be due to eye cancer in older cows.	Examine for foreign bodies in crush. Treat with eye ointment. Observe again later to make sure Pink Eye is not developing.
Pastern injury	Scab on outside of pastern	Northern Tasmania	Can be caused by projections in the race or crush or getting foot through rails.	Prevent by checking for projections and removing such hazards.
Pestivirus	One calf in one large beef herd.	Northern Tasmania	Pestivirus can cause early resorption of foetus, abortions, stillbirths and permanently infected (PI) runt calves that grow poorly and usually die by 18 months of age	Herd status can be assessed by blood or milk tests. PI animals can be detected by blood or skin sample tests. Control programs based on vaccination or exposure to PI before mating. For more information see: https://www.mla.com.au/research-and- https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0015/226041/Bovine-pestivirus-infection.pdf Use a Cattle Health Declaration to ensure you know status of cattle (including bulls) that you buy: https://www.farmbiosecurity.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/National-Cattle-Health-Declaration.pdf
Pink Eye	Widespread	Northern Tasmania	Some of: inflamed conjunctivae, 'blue' eye, discharge down cheeks, yellow pus inside eye, ulceration of cornea, eye rupture in worst cases.	Start treatment early. Separate affected cattle, use eye ointments, antibiotic injection into eyelids, eye patches or vet can stitch eyelids. If not treated early, eye can rupture. There is a vaccine available that covers most of the strains of pink eye bacteria that occur in Tasmania. See: https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0017/103904/pinkeye-in-cattle.pdf
Pleurisy in dairy heifer	One heifer in one large herd	Northern Tasmania	Respiratory distress then died. Postmortem revealed pus in	One odd case. Antibiotics and anti-inflammatories under veterinary supervision may be effective if cases detected early.

			space between ribs and lungs	
Pneumonia, acute, in cattle on feed.	Four died in one large mob fed silage in containment.	Southern Tasmania	Sudden deaths or depressed with nasal discharge in this case.	Dusty conditions, sudden colder conditions, daily silage feeding, and stress may have been part of problem. Treat cases with antibiotics. Try to reduce dust and stress, provide some shelter if possible.
Pre-cancerous lesion on eyelid of cow.	One case in one herd	Northern Tasmania	Growth or ulceration of eye or eyelid, but not typical of eye cancer. More common in breeds with pale pigmentation around eye.	These very early lesions can be frozen, burnt (electrocautery) or scraped off before they turn into a cancer.
Scabs on front of cleft of both front feet	Two steers in one small mob.	NW Tasmania	Steers not lame but did raise some suspicion of foot and mouth disease.	There were no other lesions suggesting foot and mouth disease.
Swollen hocks	One beef heifer in one medium mob	Northern Tasmania	Can be due to pestivirus, phosphorus deficiency or infection.	Testing may lead to a diagnosis and treatment.
Vena cava syndrome	One cow in one large herd	Northern Tasmania	Blood from nostrils, went down, euthanased	Multiple liver abscesses on postmortem. Liver abscess can occur due to subclinical acidosis where cow does not show acute symptoms, but rumen wall is damaged and lets bacteria through to liver. Prevent by consistent feeding of grain-based rations.
Warts	Several weaners in one small herd	Northern Tasmania	Small cauliflower-like growth anywhere on body but often around head.	Normally only seen in young cattle. Will normally self-cure if left alone. A vaccine can be made up if warts persist or are very extensive.
Yellow centre of eye (hypopyon)	One cow in one large herd	Northern Tasmania	Corneal ulcer usually due to pinkeye penetrates to inside the eye and infection and yellow pus build up inside the eye.	Can give antibiotics under veterinary supervision but unlikely to respond. Prevent pinkeye with vaccine and/or treat cases early to stop the ulcer penetrating.
ALPACAS and CAMELS				
No cases reported				
GOATS				
No cases reported				
PIGS				

No cases reported				
POULTRY				
No cases reported				
DEER				
No cases reported				

Resources

Farm biosecurity plans

Everything you need to know about farm biosecurity, for example how to make a biosecurity plan for LPA accreditation, can be found on: https://www.farmbiosecurity.com.au/

Animal health declarations

Provide an animal health declaration when selling sheep, cattle, goats, and camelids, and ask to see declarations when purchasing or moving these animals onto your property. See: https://www.farmbiosecurity.com.au/toolkit/declarations-and-statements/

myFeedback allows you to access information on carcase data, diseases and conditions detected in your sheep at slaughter through the National Sheep Health Monitoring Project. See: MLA's myFeedback for more details.

Report any suspicion of an Emergency Animal Disease

Report any suspicion of an Emergency Animal Disease, especially slobbering/lameness in ruminants and pigs, sudden death, abortion, or nervous signs in multiple pigs, to your vet or the Hotline on 1800 675 888. Early detection is critical if eradication is to be successful.

Comply with the Ruminant Feed Ban

Protect access to our export markets by never feeding animal protein such as meat meal to any ruminant including sheep, cattle, goats, deer, and alpacas. See: https://animalhealthaustralia.com.au/australian-ruminant-feed-ban/

Maintain market access through strong tracing systems

Use NVDs and NLIS tags properly so that animals can be 'contact traced' quickly if there is an outbreak of an Emergency Animal Disease or a chemical residue problem. Especially important to list all PICs on NLIS tags in sale mobs of sheep on the NVD. See: https://nre.tas.gov.au/agriculture/animal-industries/identifying-selling-moving-livestock

If you have pigs, don't feed them swill
Any material containing material of placental mammal origin (other than milk and milk by-products, properly rendered meat meal, or tallow) is swill. Swill which contains food from overseas can introduce devastating diseases such as foot and mouth disease or African swine fever into Tasmania. For more detail see: https://nre.tas.gov.au/biosecurity-tasmania/animal-biosecurity/animal-health/pigs/swill-feeding

Never feed raw untreated offal or sheep meat to dogs or cats.
Untreated offal from sheep, goats, cattle and pigs may spread hydatids if fed to dogs. Untreated sheep offal or sheep meat may spread other diseases such as sheep measles and bladder worm in sheep if fed to dogs, or Toxoplasma and Sarco if fed to cats. See: https://sheepconnecttasmania.files.wordpress.com/2023/07/sct-disease-factsheets-all.pdf

Bucks for Brains
If you have a sheep or cow showing neurological (nervous) signs you may be able to claim a subsidy for a post mortem investigation https://animalhealthaustralia.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Bucks-for-Brains_Jun16_WEB.pdf

Maintaining Tasmania's export markets:
Information from these reports may be used to help convince our overseas trading partners that we don't have certain livestock diseases that they are concerned about, thus keeping our valuable export markets open and stopping risky imports coming in. For example, Tasmania exported approximately $264 million worth of sheep meats and wool in 2020-21. See: https://nre.tas.gov.au/agriculture/facts-figures/tasmanian-agri-food-scorecards

The National Sheep Industry Biosecurity Strategy
The National Sheep Industry Biosecurity Strategy lies at the core of this program, see: www.animalhealthaustralia.com.au/nsibs

Phone A Vet
A telemedicine app that caters for production animals. Download the app from your usual provider. Can use video, photos, texting, you can select your vet. Experienced sheep, cattle, goat, camelid, and pig vets are available. See: https://www.phoneavet.com.au/

Farm Biosecurity Apps
If you want to know who is coming and going, warn visitors of risks and areas to avoid without spending your whole day on your mobile, you may like to consider an app that combines with a QR code on your farm entrances. See: https://www.farmbiosecurity.com.au/biosecurity-at-your-fingertips/

Paraboss

The previous WormBoss, LiceBoss, and FlyBoss websites are now all in one place and have a wealth of information on, and tools to manage sheep, goat and cattle parasites.

https://paraboss.com.au/

Includes an online learning resource: https://wormboss.com.au/learn-about-sheep-worm-control-in-australia/online-learning-tasmania-introduction/