Tasmanian Livestock Health Report – July 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-September.

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

Campylobacter, Listeria and Toxoplasmosis abortion in sheep: Abortions/stillbirths are common this year. Talk to your vet about having up to 5 aborted lambs (with afterbirth if possible) tested at the laboratory. Blood tests on dry ewes at marking or weaning can also detect Campylobacter and Toxoplasmosis antibodies as evidence of recent infection.
Black scour worms: high egg counts are being seen. Monthly worm egg counts on weaner sheep are recommended.
Brown stomach worm: resistance to macrocyclic lactone (ML) drench family is common. Could become more dominant with warmer, dryer weather.
Drench resistance: resistance to white, clear and macrocyclic drenches is relatively common and any other drench can also fail.
Footrot and scald: are quiet at the moment but will take off when it warms up in spring. Booster vaccination of ewes pre-lambing is a good strategy if you have a virulent strain.
Grass tetany: cows from 1 week before, to 4 weeks after calving that are on short green grass especially if fertilised with potash and/or nitrogen. Cows that are overweight and taken off feed for handling are particularly at risk. Prevent by feeding Causmag on hay.
Goitre: may be a problem in wetter areas. Lambs do not always have a large swelling in the neck. Prevent by drenching with 300 mg of potassium iodide in water per ewe pre-lambing.
Hypocalcaemia (milk fever) in ewes: don't hold heavily pregnant ewes off feed for more than 12 hours. Also beware of ewes on cereal crops/lush feed with no dry roughage – feed some hay and/or a calcium/magnesium/salt dry lick. Have calcium injection on hand.
Pregnancy toxaemia: feed late pregnant ewes well, especially twin-bearing ewes.
Listeria: nervous signs and deaths in sheep and cattle on silage, brassica bulbs or pasture.
Liver fluke: Eggs can be present in Fluketests now, but blood tests are the best way to detect 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.

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. Make sure ewes get their pre-lamb booster to protect their lambs up to marking.
Toe abscess: can be a problem if sheep's feet are continually wet and not trimmed recently.
Weaned lamb scours: If lambs are scouring and worm egg counts are zero or very low then coccidia, Yersinia or Campylobacter gut infection could be involved; consult with your vet on best options for diagnosis and treatment.
Body lice: in sheep will show up in winter. Now is a good time to inspect.
Chorioptic mange in cattle: is active now.
Ovine Johne's disease (OJD): will show up from now on in 6-tooth and older ewes and wethers under stress.
Phalaris poisoning: has been seen in sheep released from containment onto fresh shoot of Phalaris.
Waterbelly in wether lambs in feedlots: make sure salt and limestone levels in feed are adequate.

Biosecurity story of the month – Toxoplasmosis

Toxoplasmosis has already been diagnosed as a cause of abortion in sheep in Tasmania this year. It is a disease spread by cats and can cause resorption or abortion in ewes at any stage of pregnancy. Lambs can also be born alive and die within a few days of birth due to 'Toxo'.

The Toxoplasma organism is present in the placenta and people assisting at lambing or handling dead lambs, placentas or recently lambed ewes may be exposed to infection.

You may be aware that Toxoplasmosis in pregnant women can result in the birth of babies with eye damage and other severe health problems. You may not know that infection of non-pregnant people can cause illness with flu-like symptoms, swollen glands, eye damage and possibly long-term mental health problems.

Personal hygiene at lambing time is very important. Wear arm-length gloves if you assist an ewe and also wear plastic gloves when handling placentas, dead lambs, recently lambed ewes and aborted foetuses. Seal used gloves in a plastic bag for proper disposal. Wash your hands thoroughly before eating, drinking or smoking.

Carcase hygiene is also important. Toxoplasma "eggs" live for a long time in the environment, and it is important to remove sources of contamination for humans, ewes, wildlife and the source of new infection for cats. Lamb carcases, ewe carcases and placentas should be disposed of by burning or burial on a daily basis.

Micronutrients (selenium, copper, B12/cobalt)

Late winter/ early spring is the best time to sample sheep and cattle to determine micronutrient status. Liver is the best tissue to sample, and ewes or cows that die giving birth present the perfect opportunity to collect a sample of liver. Four or five samples will give you a snapshot of the micronutrient status of your flock/herd.

Regular monitoring of micronutrient levels is important as they can change from year to year. Too much can be toxic, not enough can reduce production. Routine treatments when not needed are expensive.

Sampling from a carcase is easy. Just make a cut behind the ribs on the right-hand side, identify the liver (a gun-metal/dark brown colour), cut out a piece as big as your thumb, place it in a small zip-lock sandwich bag, label and deep-freeze. When you have 4 or 5 samples, talk to your vet about getting the samples to an animal health laboratory for testing.

Abamectin can kill young lambs

If you drench lambs in the marking cradle, make sure you don't give any drench containing abamectin to lambs under 6 weeks (15 kg), as abamectin is known to be toxic to young lambs.

Vaccination Tips

Check your vaccinating gun is delivering a full dose. Squirt a dose into a 2 mL syringe barrel or measuring cylinder. Check that you are using about the right amount of vaccine for the number of lambs you have marked.

Gudair vaccine can cause "Gudair staggers" up to 18 months later if injected into the top of the neck and into muscle rather than under the skin on the side of the neck.

Maintain the 'cold chain' from point of purchase to injecting into the lamb. Use an esky and ice bricks to transport vaccine.

Scabby mouth vaccine must be used exactly as described on the label. Check some lambs in 10-14 days to ensure it has 'taken'.

Read the label for correct vaccinating technique and storage conditions for all vaccines.

animalhealth AUSTRALIA

Tasmanian Government

Diseases and conditions seen in July 2024

SHEEP				
Disease/condition	**Number of reports/ cases**	**Region**	**Details**	**Prevention, treatment, and other biosecurity advice or measures**
Abortion	A number of outbreaks in a number of flocks	Northern and Southern Tasmania	Campylobacter & Toxo diagnosed in some cases	Best diagnosis is to submit 5 aborted lambs to lab for diagnosis. Bloods for Toxo testing and vaginal swabs from ewes with evidence of recent abortion can be tested if no foetuses are available. Campylobacter, Toxo, Listeria, Salmonella all possible causes.
Acidosis (carbohydrate poisoning)	Some sheep in one medium flock when swapping	Southern Tasmania	Any starchy food can cause acidosis.	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, batch of pellets or concentrate as you do start them on grain. Draft shy feeders off into their own pen.

	batches of pellets			
Barbers pole worm	Widespread, mostly residual burdens picked up in WormTests with larval culture	Northern and Southern Tasmania, including E coast on both dryland and irrigation.	Sudden death, no scouring, pale gums, lethargy. High worm egg counts and larval ID showing mainly barbers pole worms.	Very high worm egg counts of up to 200,000 epg can be seen. See WORMBOSS website for details on diagnosis, control and prevention programs.
Black scour worm	A number of large and small flocks	NW, Northern and Southern Tasmania	Scouring, high worm egg count, Trichostrongylus identified by larval differentiation test at lab.	See WORMBOSS web site for good treatment and prevention strategies.
Body condition score low	A number of sheep and lambs in a number of flocks.	NW, Northern and Southern 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.
Campylobacter		Northern Tasmania	Fetus strain cultured from an aborted foetus.	Campylobacter vaccination is recommended especially in situations where ewes are being fed in containment, trail fed in paddock and in intensive grazing systems.
Coccidiosis	Tail end weaners in one large flock	Northern Tasmania	Moderate to high coccidia counts and zero worm eggs.	These responded to sulpha drug treatment under veterinary supervision.
Cysticercosis ("bladder worm")	Detected at abattoir in 0.6% of lambs and 0.4 % of mutton carcases.	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 or 'runners' to be 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/
Dags	Wide-spread often affecting majority of the mob.	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 lambing ewes - sepsis	A small number of ewes in one large flock	Southern Tasmania	Infection of damage to uterus after difficult or assisted birth.	Ewes that have a difficult/assisted birth usually benefit from antibiotic and anti-inflammatory treatment under veterinary supervision. Vaccinate ewes with 5 or 6 in one pre-lambing.
Deaths of weaned lambs	A number of weaners in a number of flocks	Southern Tasmania	Mainly merino wether weaners in light condition	Increased nutrition as well as regular WormTests and drenching if required. If losses persist best to have post mortems done to determine cause so that appropriate treatment and preventative measures can be used.

			and unable to resist worms, but significant losses in ewe weaners as well.	
Deaths in adult sheep	A number of deaths on a number of farms	Northern and Southern Tasmania	Multiple causes associated with lambing, malnutrition, OJD, worms, 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.
Dermo (lumpy wool)	A number of young sheep on a number of properties	Northern and Southern Tasmania	Wool in hard blocks along the topline.	Can treat with long-acting tetracycline during dry period, wait for 6 weeks and shear. Wool still valuable. Prevent by not yarding sheep when wet to skin. See: https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0013/314320/9819-Lumpy-wool---Primefact-986.pdf
Difficult births (primary dystocia)	A small number of ewes in one large flock	Southern Tasmania	Mixed age ewes kept at BCS 3 but still had a small number of difficult births.	Ewe can be assisted. Prevention: Ewes bearing single lambs should be kept at BCS to 3 and placed in paddocks with no more than 1000 Kg of green dry matter per hectare in last 6 weeks of pregnancy and over lambing. Use low birth weight prime lamb sire over merino ewes. A small number of dytocias are inevitable.
Dog bite	Detected at the abattoir in 0.3% of lamb carcases.	Northern and Southern Tasmania	Bruising and puncture wounds trimmed at abattoir	Muzzle dogs that bite.
Downer ewe	One case in one medium flock	Northern Tasmania	Recently lambed twins, low BCS, possible calcium deficiency.	Treat with calcium injection, antibiotics and anti-inflammatories under veterinary supervision. Prevention: feed low BCS ewes better to get them to BCS 2.8 (singles) or 3 (twin-bearing) by lambing. Offer limestone/causmag/salt mix from scanning on.
Ear tag infection	A number of lambs on one large property	Northern Tasmania	Swelling, crusts, discharge around area where tag goes through ear	Clean and apply antiseptic spray. If ear is swollen may need antibiotics. Prevent by soaking tags in antiseptic solution before applying.
Enteritis in weaned lambs	One outbreak with multiple deaths	Southern Tasmania	A number of ewe lambs died, many scoured	Worms also involved in this case. Sometimes removing the worms will be enough, but many cases have a Yersinia and/or coccidia problem as well and treatment with appropriate antibiotics under veterinary supervision may be necessary.
Flystrike scars	Several cases in several flocks	Northern and Southern Tasmania	Bare skin usually above tail or on body	Flystrike has damaged skin and wool has not grown back. Prevention: see the FLYBOSS website.
Footrot, virulent	Several large properties	Southern and Northern Tasmania	Only chronic cases seen, spread reported in one flock. Low % on dryland. Some successful eradication programs this last summer.	Eradication inspections completed now and some good cure rates from footbathing and vaccinating have been seen. Most managers just vaccinating and footbathing at this time of year. Aim to give vaccine booster just before ewes go into lambing paddocks. Footbathing and vaccination, paring, culling "chronics" that don't respond to treatment are on-going strategies. Long-acting oxytetracycline antibiotics under veterinary supervision are useful to treat chronic cases when conditions are 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 one large flock.	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	Hard outer case of a short horn gets knocked off usually in yards.	Bleeds but usually heals quickly, Spray with antiseptic. Prevent fly strike and allow time to recover.
Horn growing into head (in-grown horn)	One wether	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.
Hypocalcaemia ('milk fever")	2 out of 400 heavily pregnant ewes	Southern Tasmania	Late pregnancy ewes go down, usually after period off feed or on cereal crops.	Treat with injection containing calcium (eg 4-in-1) 1/5 of a pack under skin. Warm pack in hot water before injection if possible and massage in well. Should get up within 30 minutes. If green rumen contents are coming out of nostrils give antibiotic cover under veterinary supervision. Prevent with mineral supplement in latter half of pregnancy, especially if on cereal crops or lush pasture, don't keep off feed long eg if shearing or crutching.
Ill-thrift in weaned lambs	A moderate number of lambs in one large flock	Southern Tasmania	Some weaners doing well, some very poor.	Most dryland pastures over summer do not have enough energy or protein for weaner sheep and even adult dry sheep will lose body condition. Fodder crops, irrigated pastures or supplementary feed required. Worms (especially Nematodirus in autumn), fluke, footrot, chronic pneumonia and sometimes selenium, copper or B12 deficiency can also contribute to ill-thrift.
Kangaroo gait	Suspected in 2 ewes in one medium flock	Northwest Tasmania	Seen in ewes up to 6 weeks after lambing, due to damage to nerves in front legs	Ewes move by hind leg action alone so look like a kangaroo hopping. Cause not known, will often recover if looked after.
Lameness	A number of sheep in three medium flocks.	Northern Tasmania	Reluctant to bear full weight on one leg.	Can be due to footrot, foot abscess, toe abscess, arthritis, injury and a number of other conditions. Examine foot and leg thoroughly, treat appropriately.
Lice (body lice)	Widespread.	Northern and 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.	Tend to show up when sheep are stressed. 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.
Listeria	Five ewe weaners on one property	Southern Tasmania	Sheep may have head tilt, walk in circles, die. Often associated with silage or	This case associated with silage feeding. Remove from offending feed. Treat early with antibiotics but at best usually 50% success rate.

			brassica bulb feeding.	
Liver fluke	Detected at abattoir in 0.02 % of lamb and 0.05 % of mutton carcases.	Northern and Southern Tasmania	Abattoir detection, farm postmortem 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. Triclabendazole best treatment from November to June as it kills immature fluke as well as mature fluke, try to use an alternative chemical to kill adult fluke at this time of year. See fact sheet on https://sheepconnecttas.com.au/disease-factsheets/
Nasal discharge, bloody	One lamb in one small mob	Northern Tasmania	Blood seen running from both nostrils.	Could be injury or foreign body (eg a stick or grass stalk) caught in the nostrils. Examine closely. Check that dogs are not biting noses. Rest and re-examine. Handle mobs calmly so that labs don't run into fences & gates.
Nasal discharge, purulent, both nostrils	Several weaners in a number of flocks	NW, Northern and Southern Tasmania	Can be due to viral or bacterial infections	If sheep are bright and alert no action required. If depressed, laboured breathing, deaths, veterinary advice should be sought.
Newborn lamb death - hypothermia	One lamb death in one small flock	Northern Tasmania	Newborn lambs found dead in lambing paddock in exposed position after a very cold wet windy night	Lamb birth weight, body condition score of the ewe, shelter and amount of feed on offer are major factors. Diseases such as Toxo or Campylobacter, slow birth, mismothering, can contribute to such losses. Lamb postmortems can help identify causes and solutions.
Newborn lamb deaths at several days old	A number of lamb deaths in one large flock	Southern Tasmania	Newborn lambs seemed normal when born but found dead at about 2 days old.	Diseases such as Toxo or Campylobacter, slow birth, mismothering, can contribute to such losses. Lamb postmortems can help identify causes and solutions.
Ocular (eye) discharge both eyes	Several lambs from several medium flocks.	Northern Tasmania	Could be first stage of Pinkeye	Best to leave alone and keep checking, if possible, only yard if you have to.
Ovine Johnes' disease (OJD)	Positive OJD culture in one pool of 50 ewes.	Northern Tasmania	No wasting of sheep over 2 yrs old and only one pool positive so believed to be an early infection.	Death rate can usually be reduced to low levels by vaccinating lambs at marking with Gudair vaccine. If OJD is confirmed present in the flock, cull any sheep over 18 months of age that waste away and don't respond to drenching. See: https://animalhealthaustralia.com.au/johnes-disease-in-sheep/
Pivot wheel deaths	Several lambs in one large flock.	Northern Tasmania	Lambs found dead in pivot wheel ruts.	Often crossbred lambs, die overnight with head facing in direction wheels come from. No preventions available at present.
Pleurisy	Detected at abattoir in 1 % of mutton and	NW, Southern and Northern Tasmania	Lungs stuck to chest wall. Usually results	Treat sick sheep with cough or respiratory distress with antibiotics (under vet supervision). Try to avoid stress events, drench sheep carefully, avoid dusty feedstuffs.

	0.9 % of lamb carcases.		in major trimming.	
Pneumonia and hypocalcaemia in late pregnant ewes	A number of cases in heavily pregnant MA ewes	Southern Tasmania	Deaths, difficulty breathing, purulent nasal discharge	Postmortem showed changes in front part of lungs. Antibiotic treatment of cases (best caught early), and in this case, calcium as well. Reduce any stress factors. See https://animalhealthaustralia.com.au/wp-content/uploads/NSHMP-Pneumonia-Pleurisy.pdf
Respiratory condition in young lamb	One lamb in one medium flock	NW Tasmania	Difficult breathing may be due to pneumonia or pleurisy	Some of these will respond to antibiotics under veterinary supervision.
Runts	A small number of lambs from one small flock	Northern Tasmania	Stunted lambs that are unlikely to grow out. May have been triplets, orphaned or suffered from illness.	Best euthanased but can try high protein/high energy feed (introduce slowly).
Sarcosporidia ("Sarco")	Detected at abattoir in 0.5 % of mutton 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 seen in 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/
Sheep measles	Detected at abattoir in 0.9% of lambs and 0.5% of mutton carcasses.	NW, 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/
Sudden deaths on irrigated lucerne or clover	A small number of deaths in one large flock.	Northern Tasmania	Lambs found dead and blown up.	May be caused by 'lucerne red gut', Pulpy Kidney (PK) or frothy bloat. Give third PK vaccination or use 8-in-one, feed hungry lambs before placing on irrigated legumes, offer good quality hay while on legumes, add bloat oil to water trough, feed supplements containing rumensin.
Sunburn scars	Several crossbred ewes in a medium mob	Northern Tasmania	Bare area of skin along topline.	Bare shorn British breed or XB sheep that are shorn very close to skin can suffer sunburn if placed in a paddock without enough shade.
Toxoplasma abortions	One foetus in one large flock.	Northern Tasmania	Toxo can cause resorption or abortion at any stage of pregnancy	Toxo is spread by cats. For control strategies see: https://sheepconnecttasmania.files.wordpress.com/2013/04/sc-factsheet-no10-toxoplasmosis_lr.pdf

Vaccination lesions	Seen in a small number of sheep in two large flocks. Also detected at the abattoir in 5.9% of mutton and 0.4% of lamb carcases.	NW, Southern and Northern Tasmania	Caused by vaccinating into the muscle, armpit, top of neck etc. Trimming can involve removing the whole hind leg or front leg.	Extra care must be taken with 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
Vaginal discharge and depressed post-lambing	One ewe in one medium flock	Southern Tasmania	Discharge from vulva and depressed after lambing.	Antibiotics, oxytocin and anti-inflammatories under veterinary supervision.
Vaginal prolapse	A small number of ewes in one large flock	Southern Tasmania	Pink mass protrudes from vulva in late pregnant ewe. Ewes bearing multiples more commonly affected.	Treat: There are plastic devices that can be inserted and also straps or harness that can be used once the prolapse has been replaced. Prevention: Remove tails at third joint (tip of vulva) when marking ewe lambs, keep pregnant ewes (especially twin-bearing ewes) on flatter ground in last half of pregnancy, keep BCS 3 to 3.3. Don't feed salt or swedes in last 1/3 of pregnancy. Offer hay if on low dry matter feed. Shear in last third of pregnancy. Maintain steady body weight from start of mating to scanning. See https://www.fwi.co.uk/livestock/husbandry/livestock-lambing/step-step-guide-dealing-vaginal-prolapse-sheep for a guide on replacing vaginal prolapse in ewes.
Wart	One sheep in one large flock	Northern Tasmania	Crusty growth on haired skin of face.	Best to leave alone, usually self-heal. Vet can remove surgically under local anaesthetic. "Wart-off' can be applied daily.
Wool break	A small number of sheep in a number of flocks	NW, Northern and Southern Tasmania	Wool staples easily pulled apart. Whole fleece may fall out.	Any stress can weaken the wool fibre as it grows. Individual sheep may lose fleece after acute infection eg mastitis, whole mobs can have 'tender wool' after nutritional restriction or disease outbreak (eg heavy worm infestation) events.
Wool loss and blood around eye	One sheep in one small flock	Northern Tasmania	May have been due to an injury or chronic condition such as entropion (turned-in eyelid)	Examine thoroughly and treat appropriately.
Worms	Widespread	NW, Northern and Southern Tasmania.	Faecal egg counts at laboratory may be lower than last month. Black scour worm and large bowel worm common.	Differentiate from nutritional scour, Yersinia 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
Yersinia/coccidia enteritis	Weaners in one large flock	Northern Tasmania	Scouring and deaths.	Differentiate from worms or coccidia etc by worm egg count and coccidia examination at lab. Ask lab to culture for Yersinia as well. Lab can advise which antibiotics should work. Treat scouring animals. Some stress factor is usually present (eg poor access to water, worms etc) and should be corrected.
CATTLE				

Bloat	One cow in one large herd.	Southern Tasmania	Left flank bulging out a lot. Probably gassy bloat as not on legumes.	Treat: oral vegetable oil or pleuronic can break down froth to gas and allow burping out of the gas if due to eating lucerne/clover too fast. Chronic bloat can also be due to internal damage ("vagal bloat") – a vet may be able to help. Prevent: blocks, drenches, additives to trough water, capsules.
Body condition low	One cow in one medium herd.	Northern Tasmania	BCS less than 2 (1 to 5 scale)	Veterinary investigation, check feed quantity and quality, micronutrient levels, worms, liver fluke status.
Chorioptic mange	Two steers in one medium herd.	Northern Tasmania	Hair loss around tail head and flanks. Rough scaley skin. Diagnosis by skin scraping.	More common as winter progresses. Can become severe if cattle are stressed and short on feed. A number of registered treatments are available including ML drenches and pour-ons. See: http://www.liceboss.com.au/cattle/lice-mites/species-of-mites.php
Downer cows	Two cows in one large beef herd	Southern Tasmania	Late pregnancy, only partial response to a 4-in-1 injection.	These cows had been quite fat but little feed available now, so probably pregnancy toxaemia.
Eye cancer	One advanced case in one large herd, one early case in one small herd.	Northern and Southern Tasmania	Growth or ulceration of eye or eyelid. More common in breeds with white pigmentation around eye.	Very early growths can be frozen, burnt (electrocautery) or scraped off. More advanced require eye removal surgery. Severe require euthanasia. Don't transport if cow can't close the eyelid over the growth.
Grass tetany (low blood magnesium)	Several cows in two medium herds	Southern Tasmania	Week before to 4 weeks after calving. Found dead or down, hyper-excitable.	Treat with 4-in-1 packs under skin. Prevent with Causmag on hay or magnesium boluses. Magnesium blocks may not ensure all cows get protective dose every day. See: https://www.agric.wa.gov.au/livestock-biosecurity/grass-tetany-beef-cattle-prevention-and-treatment#:~:text=Grass%20tetany%20is%20a%20highly,Angus%20cattle%20and%20their%20crosses
Hair loss over hips and pin bones	One cow in one medium herd	Northern Tasmania	May be due to riding by other cows on heat, or cow may have been down.	Skin scrapings may be worth taking if seen as a problem worth investigating.
Mastitis in a beef cow.	One case in one large herd	Southern Tasmania	Hard quarter and abnormal milk.	Staph cultured. Antibiotics by injection usually employed for beef cattle. See https://www.dairyaustralia.com.au/en/animal-management-and-milk-quality/mastitis-and-milk-quality#.YFq2Z68zY2w
Metritis	Several cows in one large beef herd.	Southern Tasmania	Yellowish discharge from vagina.	Antibiotics and anti-inflammatories under veterinary supervision. Use good hygiene if assisting calvings.
Milk fever	Several cows in one large beef herd	Southern Tasmania	Usually mature cows.	Treat with calcium injection under skin. Prevent with anionic transition diet in late pregnancy.
Pestivirus	One undergrown scoured calf in one large beef herd.	Southern Tasmania	Pestivirus can cause early resorption of foetus, abortions, stillbirths and	Herd status can be assessed by blood tests 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-

			permanently infected (PI) runt calves that grow poorly and usually die by 18 months of age	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 the status of cattle (including bulls) that you buy: https://www.farmbiosecurity.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/National-Cattle-Health-Declaration_Fillable_2022.pdf
Pneumonia/pleurisy in calves	One calf in one medium herd	Southern Tasmania	Calves may show high temperature and respiratory signs when alive.	Prevention mainly by ensuring 2 x 2 litres of good quality colostrum in first 12 hours of life, good shelter and clean bedding.
Pregnancy toxaemia	One beef cow in one large herd	Southern Tasmania	A fat beef cow becomes a downer in late pregnancy	If heavily pregnant overweight beef cows have a feed check, they can go down with pregnancy toxaemia. Overweight dairy cows usually affected in early lactation. For treatment see your vet. Prevention – don't let cows get too fat, if they are fat, do not reduce feed levels suddenly.
Retained afterbirth	One cow in a medium herd	Southern Tasmania	Afterbirth still hanging out more than three days after giving birth	If afterbirth cannot be easily removed manually, antibiotic treatment under veterinary supervision should be started and a weight such as a plastic bottle of water tied to the afterbirth to help it come out over the next few days.
ALPACAS and CAMELS				
No cases reported				
GOATS				
Worms	A number of goats in a medium herd	Northern Tasmania	Scouring, losing weight	Confirm with egg count. Treat with drenches registered for goats or off-label as per vets' instructions.
PIGS				
No cases reported				
POULTRY				
No cases reported				
DEER				
Deaths after sedation	A number of farmed deer in one small herd	Southern Tasmania	Deer died overnight after sedation for tagging.	Excess iron and manganese detected in creek water and liver tissue.

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/