Tasmanian Livestock Health Report – August 2025

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-October.

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

Arthritis in lambs: If you have more than the odd case it may be worth asking your vet about testing for Erysipelas. There is a vaccine for Erysipelas.
Campylobacter, Listeria and Toxoplasmosis stillbirths in sheep: If you suspect late abortions/stillbirths, talk to your vet about having up to 5 aborted lambs (with afterbirth if possible) tested at the laboratory (package deal). 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. Heavily pregnant and lactating ewes also susceptible to worms and may need monitoring.
Brown stomach worm: heavy burdens have been found in ewes with moderate worm egg counts.
Body lice: in sheep are showing up now. Good time to inspect.
Chorioptic mange in cattle: is very common now but will start to self-cure as spring progresses.
Drench resistance: resistance to white, clear, macrocyclic lactone (ML) drenches and some combinations is relatively common and any other drench can also fail.
Footrot and scald: Starting to spread now and will become more active as weather warms up.
Foot abscess: common when heavy sheep are walking around in wet pasture all day. Early treatment with antibiotics and anti-inflammatories under vet supervision can heal some cases.
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.
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 1:1:1 calcium/magnesium/salt dry lick. Have calcium injection on hand.
Milk fever: can be seen in lactating dairy cows, especially older Channel Island breeds.
Phalaris toxicity, acute: when hungry sheep enter a paddock with short, frosted Phalaris. Test paddock first for a week with a small mob of low-value sheep.

Phalaris staggers: Sheep (and even cattle) on short Phalaris pastures. Cobalt is protective.
Pregnancy toxaemia: feed late pregnant ewes well, especially twin-bearing ewes.
Pneumonia: has been diagnosed in ewe lambs and rams, and weaner cattle. Slow growth rates or weight loss, some coughing when yarded, some nasal discharge but not usually that obvious, some deaths.
Pulpy kidney (PK): Make sure lambs get a booster if going onto rich feed such as clover or lucerne. Vaccinating ewes protects their lambs up to marking, 3-in-1 is cheaper than 5- or 6-in-1 and gives same PK immunity.
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 can detect both immature and mature fluke so may be the best way to detect liver fluke in live animals.
Pleurisy: is common, 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 consigned lambs.
Ovine Johne's disease (OJD): will show up from now on in 6-tooth and older ewes and wethers under stress.
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.
White muscle disease: If lambs get stiff and stop walking when mustered for marking, suspect white muscle disease, especially on clover dominant pasture.

Biosecurity story of the month – development of a new foot and mouth disease vaccine in Australia

Many of us have been vaccinated with mRNA Covid vaccines. Now an mRNA foot and mouth disease (FMD) vaccine suitable for use in livestock has been developed by Tiba Biotech, the NSW Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development, Meat & Livestock Australia, and the German Friedrich –Loeffler Institut.

Local manufacture of mRNA animal vaccines is supported by the University of NSW's RNA Institute who have a demonstrated capacity to manufacture mRNA vaccines.

It is fully synthetic, making it safer and much faster to produce, without the use of infectious material. The vaccine is now undergoing further testing to demonstrate it is safe and effective. In recent overseas trials, vaccinated cattle exposed to the virus did not contract the disease and importantly did not shed the virus to infect others.

Local manufacture will give Australia a lot more control over vaccine availability, should we require it in the event of an outbreak. Currently we depend on access to an overseas stockpile that we maintain for this purpose. Producing our own mRNA vaccine will give us the ability to quickly customise it to the strain of FMD that is present – different vaccines are required for each of the different strains of FMD.

Using mRNA vaccines would also allow us to differentiate between vaccinated and infected animals which can be critical in attaining an early declaration of disease freedom after an outbreak.

National Biosecurity week

The last week of August was National Biosecurity Week.

With over 75% of new or emerging human diseases originating in animals, early detection of new or foreign animal diseases is more important than ever in protecting human as well as animal health. Effective biosecurity protects Australia's agriculture, food systems, economy, natural environment and way of life.

Biosecurity is not just about borders and white overalls; it's something we can all contribute to.

In Tasmania the General Biosecurity Duty means we all have the legal responsibility to take all reasonable and practicable steps to prevent, eliminate or minimise biosecurity risk when dealing with animals and animal products. This includes making sure we comply with all import requirements.

If an emergency animal disease does enter Tasmania, early detection will give us the opportunity to eliminate the disease quickly. Ring your vet or the Emergency Animal Disease Hotline on 1800 675 88 (available 24/7) if you have any suspicion of an emergency animal disease such as foot and mouth disease or see signs of disease you are not familiar with.

Diseases and conditions seen in August 2025

SHEEP				
Disease/condition	**Number of reports/ cases**	**Region**	**Details**	**Prevention, treatment, and other biosecurity advice or measures**
Abortion	Maiden ewes and ewe lambs in two large flocks	Northern and Southern Tasmania	Both flocks use Campylobacter vaccine so Toxo suspected	You can identify dry ewes at marking and take bloods for Toxo and Campylobacter blood testing. Campylobacter, Toxo, Listeria, Salmonella all possible causes.
Acidosis	One ewe in one large flock	Southern Tasmania	Sudden access to substantial grain ration with buffer added.	"Porridge" scour, depressed, die. Early treatment with oral penicillin or virginiamycin can help. Move affected sheep from source of grain, feed roughage. Oral bicarb not recommended.
Body condition score low	Small numbers of sheep in a number of flocks	NW, Northern and Southern Tasmania	Body condition less than BCS 2. One low BCS sheep in a large mob could be OJD.	Usually not enough feed. Worms, fluke, and specific deficiencies (copper, selenium, B12), broken mouth, aged, and diseases eg OJD, footrot may also be involved.
Bottle jaw	A number of adult sheep in two large flocks.	Northern Tasmania	Bottle jaw is a soft swelling under the lower jaw. If you press your thumb into it firmly for a minute, the depression will remain afterwards.	Commonly caused by high worm burdens or liver fluke at this time of year. Can also be due to OJD, Barbers Pole worm residual infections, or malnutrition. Oedema due to photosensitisation or swelling due to an abscess can also look similar. Diagnosis by blood test, postmortem (Barber's Pole worms easily seen in 4th stomach, liver fluke can be squeezed out of cut section of liver) or WORMTEST/FLUKETEST (manure sample test). Treat with effective drench.

Broken mouth	One ewe in one small flock	Southern Tasmania	Incisor teeth worn down to gums, or some incisors missing. Molar teeth can also be missing as in this case.	Cull if condition score starting to drop.
Coccidia	One ewe in one large flock	Northern Tasmania	Lab reported seeing some coccidia in sections of the lining of the small intestine.	Many young and old sheep excrete some coccidia but are not affected. Only treat for coccidia if scouring with low roundworm egg count or if postmortem shows typical damage to intestines.
Crow attack	30 lambs and 20 ewes on one property	Southern Tasmania.	Large numbers of hungry crows (forest ravens) attack ewes when they go down to lamb and start pecking lambs as they are born.	You can try crow traps, scare guns, providing plenty of wallaby carcases at a location near the lambing paddock or poisoning with alphachloralose (contact David White, Biosecurity Tasmania on (03) 6478 4117)
Cryptorchid	One 'stag' in one large mob.	Southern Tasmania	Only one testicle in scrotum, the other up in the body at marking. Occasionally none in scrotum.	Usually inherited but can also be caused by hormone-like compounds in feed ewes consumed during pregnancy. Cull affected animal and sire if in a stud situation and only progeny from one ram affected. Usually still fertile but cryptorchid lambs hard to mark properly resulting in stags.
Dags	A relatively small number of lambs in several flocks, a high proportion of 4T wethers in one large flock.	NW, Northern and Southern Tasmania	Due to scouring. Most due to green pick after recent rain and worms.	May be due to worms, gut infection (eg Salmonella, Yersinia, coccidia), sudden change in diet. Have a WORMTEST egg count done and ask the laboratory to check for coccidia, culture for Yersinia and Campylobacter 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.
Dentigerous cysts (lumpy jaw)	One wether in one large mob.	Southern Tasmania.	Boney hard lump under chin. May become infected.	A cyst or cavity forms around an un-erupted incisor tooth. Secondary infection common.
Depressed lambs, no scour	Several lambs in one large flock	Southern Tasmania	Could be a number of infections and toxicities.	These responded to antibiotic treatment under veterinary supervision so may have been pneumonia.
Dermo (lumpy wool)	Two young Merino sheep in one large flock.	Southern Tasmania	Wool in hard blocks along topline.	Can treat with long-acting tetracycline under veterinary supervision 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
Drench resistant worms to BZ/LEV/ML	One large flock	Southern Tasmania	Egg counts not reduced by at least 95% 10-14 days after drenching with a triple active drench	See WORMBOSS for strategies to manage and prevent drench resistance. This one was to a BZ/LEV/ML triple combination drench.

Erysipelas	One ewe in one large flock	Northern Tasmania	Cultured from liver. Arthritis common in lambs on this property.	This infection may have been secondary to other conditions in this particular ewe. There is a vaccine for Erysipelas and is worth considering if Erysipelas is causing enough arthritis lameness in lambs.
Ewe deaths - worms	A number of ewes in one large flock	Southern Tasmania	Sporadic ewe deaths, medium levels of worm eggs in Wormtest, high numbers of brown stomach worms on necropsy	A small proportion of ewes in flock with higher worm burdens. Brown stomach worms do not produce large number of eggs, so worm egg count can be only medium. Drench using proven effective drench and move to 'clean' paddocks if available.
Foot abscess (heel abscess)	Several ewes in one large flock.	Northern Tasmania.	Swelling of one foot, hot, painful and discharge pus in acute stage.	Keep mob average BCS to 3 - 3.3, autumn or pre-lamb shear, reduce interdigital skin injury, walk through 5-10% formalin footbath weekly. Treat with long-acting broad-spectrum antibiotics and anti-inflammatories under veterinary supervision, keep feet dry eg on slatted floor of shearing shed, epsom salts poultice on drainage point and bandage. Ensure fit to load if transported.
Footrot, virulent	Mostly chronic, but some active, lesions in a proportion of sheep in three large flocks.	Northern and Southern Tasmania	Mostly carryover lesions from last spring, but spread is just starting now.	Vaccine and foot bathing are the logical treatments at this time of year. Try to keep the number of infected sheep to a minimum if eradication planned for summer. 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
Footrot (intermediate)	One medium flock	Southern Tasmania	Under -running of hoof horn only extends part way up the sole of the hoof. Can be eradicated but causes less production loss than virulent footrot.	Paring, footbathing, culling chronic cases, vaccine can all be used at this time. Eradication by repeated foot inspections and culling all infected sheep can be executed this coming summer. Ensure culls fit to load if transported. Prevention: Ask for a Sheep Health Declaration when buying sheep and ensure section B1 confirms flock is free of virulent footrot but still footbath and check feet on arrival. 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 small number of sheep in two small flocks.	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.
Incoordination in ewes	Three 3-year -old ewes in one medium flock	Southern Tasmania	Unable to walk normally.	Could be injury to neck, but pain in several feet can appear to be incoordination. Can also be due to PEM (B1 deficiency), FSE, brain or spinal abscess, tumour, Phalaris staggers.
Infected shearing cut	One sheep in one large flock	Northern Tasmania	Hot swollen wound, pus may be present, sometimes only seen when scabs removed.	Treat: Clean, drain pus, irrigate with antiseptic solution. May need antibiotics under veterinary supervision. Prevention: Clean and disinfect shearing board before shearing starts. Combs and cutters soaked in disinfectant solution.

Horn broken	Two sheep in one large flock	Southern Tasmania	Horn broken and hanging down while handling in yards.	Complete removal. Pian relief under vet supervision if possible. 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 in one large flock	Southern 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 skin is removed with horn.
Lameness	A number of sheep in a number of small and large flocks	NW, Northern and Southern 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.
Lice (body lice)	Four large flocks affected, two by incursions of infested strays.	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 and inspect thoroughly on arrival and at the end of their 'hotel quarantine' period. Treat on arrival if wool is short enough or use the oral product and isolate for 4 weeks. Maintain sheep-proof boundary fences.
Lungworm (large)	One 4T wether in one large flock	Northern Tasmania	Lungworm rare in general and more so in older sheep	Large lungworm in sheep take a long time to develop (7 weeks) and larvae rather than eggs are found in the sheep's faeces so a special test must be requested for detection in faecal samples. Most broad-spectrum drenches kill lungworm – check label.
Mastitis (acute)	A number of ewes in one medium flocks.	Southern Tasmania	Ho, swollen, inflamed udder with abnormal milk (from watery to mayonnaise consistency).	Acute: strip out as much milk as you can and administer antibiotic treatment by intramuscular injection and anti-inflammatories under veterinary supervision. If only one half of udder is affected ewe can produce nearly as much milk from the other half if she recovers.
Mastitis (chronic)	One ewe in one small flock	Southern Tasmania	Chronic: hard udder, no milk or small amount of clotted milk.	Best to cull such ewes as antibiotic and anti-inflammatory treatment unlikely to cure.
Muscle degeneration	Several ewes in one large flock.	Northern Tasmania	Ewes had trouble moving front legs forward. Muscle degeneration seen on microscopic examination of muscles.	Selenium levels were normal so not white muscle disease. Cause unknown at this stage.
Muzzle/lip injury	One wether in one large flock	Northern Tasmania	Swollen, deformed, green cud stain due to deformed lip allowing cud to leak.	Muzzle dogs that bite.

Nasal discharge, purulent, both nostrils	A small number of lambs and adult sheep in a number of small and large flocks.	NW, Northern and Southern Tasmania	Can be due to viral or bacterial infections. Rarely due to nasal bots.	If sheep are bright and alert no action required. If depressed, laboured breathing, deaths, veterinary advice should be sought.
Newborn lamb deaths	Excess deaths in many flocks	NW, Northern and Southern Tasmania	Newborn lambs found dead in lambing paddock	Can be due to diseases such as Toxo or Campylobacter, or can be due to slow birth, mis-mothering, exposure etc. Lamb post mortems can help identify causes and solutions.
Newborn lamb death - hypothermia	Many lamb deaths in many flocks	NW, Northern and Southern Tasmania	Newborn lambs found dead in lambing paddock in exposed position after a very cold wet windy night	Diseases such as Toxo or Campylobacter, slow birth, mis-mothering, can contribute to such losses. Lamb post mortems can help identify causes and solutions. Lambing ewes down in body condition score 3, providing adequate feed on offer and providing shelter all help reduce exposure losses.
Lamb deaths underweight	One lamb in one small flock	Southern Tasmania	Ewe in low BCS due to broken mouth had small twins.	Mouth ewes at weaning and do not mate ewes with broken mouths. Lamb twin-bearing ewes in body condition score 3.3.
Nasal bleeding	One lamb from one medium flock	Northern Tasmania	Probably due to collision with fence	Handle lambs calmly.
Ocular (eye) discharge both eyes	A small number of lambs and adult sheep from two medium flocks.	NW, Northern and Southern Tasmania	Could be first stage of Pinkeye	Best to leave alone and keep checking if possible, only yard if you have to.
Osteoporosis	15% of one large mob	Northern Tasmania	Seen as broken bones, lameness, paralysis especially after handling. These were short wool lambs on short rotation ryegrass.	Cereal crops and short rotation ryegrass have low levels of calcium, so offer limestone/coarse salt/coarse Causmag plus vitamin D loose mix or add to feed if accustomed to grain. Respond to Vitamin ADE injections if rickets present as well but must be handled carefully to prevent more fractures. In this case osteoporosis found in conjunction with rickets so additional calcium and vitamin D provided mixed with barley ration.
Ovine Johne's disease (OJD)	One sheep from a mob of shedding sheep imported from the mainland.	Northern Tasmania	Adult sheep over 2 yrs old waste away over several months and die despite drenching. Small numbers of vaccinated sheep can still die from OJD. These were unvaccinated.	Quickest diagnosis is by postmortem. Prevent by vaccinating lambs at marking with Gudair vaccine. If confirmed present in the flock, cull any sheep over 18 months of age that waste away and don't respond to drenching. See factsheet on: https://animalhealthaustralia.com.au//wp-content/uploads/dlm_uploads/2023/10/OJD_factsheet.pdf and https://animalhealthaustralia.com.au/about-jd/

PEM (polioencephalomalacia)	20 ewes in one large flock	Northern Tasmania	'Star gazing', blindness, other neurological signs, deaths	Usually associated with rich diet, these were confinement fed. Treat early with Vitamin B1 injections. Animal Health Australia subsidies available for postmortems on certain categories of neurological cases.
Photosensitisation	A small number of sheep in one medium and one large flock.	NW, Northern and Southern Tasmania	Skin peels off face, ears, around eyes, on back. These were mostly old lesions, some within the last month.	If acute, 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-histamines and antibiotics if necessary, under veterinary supervision, offer deep shade, move to new paddock.
Pinkeye scars on eyes	A number of ewes in one large flock	Northern Tasmania	White areas of scar tissue on the cornea, sometimes both eyes	Treatment not of much use in chronic stages, eye needs time to heal. May not heal completely and some scarring may remain.
Poll injuries on rams	A number of rams in one large flock	Northern Tasmania	Fighting injuries	Normal behaviour, especially in lead-up to joining. Use flystrike prevention in fly season. Keep smaller/younger rams separate if possible.
Pregnancy Toxaemia (twin lamb disease)	A number of ewes in a number of small and large flocks.	Southern Tasmania	Caused by illness eg footrot/foot abscess or insufficient energy in diet in last 7 weeks of pregnancy. Usually in ewes carrying multiples or very a large single lamb.	If heavily pregnant ewes go down in last 6 weeks of pregnancy, inject 1/5 milk fever pack under skin and massage in well (to differentiate from milk fever). If ewe does not get up within an hour, twin lamb disease is most likely cause. Oral treatments rarely work unless you catch them while still able to walk but dropping out of back of mob and 'star-gazing".
Quintuplet pregnancy complications	One ewe in one small flock	Southern Tasmania	Pregnancy toxaemia, difficult birth	Extra care needed for ewes bearing multiples.
Rickets	A number of weaned lambs in one large flock	Northern Tasmania	Lameness, fractured bones, poor growth rates in July/August on short rotation ryegrass or cereal crops.	Treat with Vitamin D and additional limestone/Causmag/salt/Vitamin D in feed if possible to avoid yarding. Prevention through Vitamin D3 injections (usually as ADE) prior to grazing short rotation ryegrass or cereal crops plus offer limestone/Causmag/salt loose mix.
Sarco (dog form)	One ewe in one large flock.	Southern Tasmania	Detected in sections of heart, tongue and skeletal muscle as an incidental finding.	A species of Sarco that cycles through dog and sheep. Can cause nervous symptoms in sheep (rare). Usually does no harm.
Scald	A number of lambs in one large flock and a number of ewes in another large flock.	Northern and 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.
Scouring with low egg counts in 4T wethers	A number of wethers in one large flock	Northern Tasmania	Egg counts zero	Possibly dietary – low dry matter content in pasture or plants such as capeweed, also could be E coli, coccidia, Yersinia, Salmonella, Campylobacter enteritis, micronutrient deficiencies as well and may respond to Sulpha drugs or antibiotics under vet supervision. Can also

				be immature worm infestation not yet producing eggs. Use effective drench or repeat worm egg count in 2 weeks.
Selenium deficiency	One large flock	Northern Tasmania	Detected by liver testing.	Deficiency is widespread in Northern and Southern Tasmania and the Bass strait Islands. Deficiency can cause white muscle disease (usually in lambs), newborn lamb deaths, slow growth rates in young sheep, reduced immunity to footrot and other diseases, reduced fertility. See factsheet: https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0016/111355/Selenium-deficiency-in-sheep.pdf
Shelly toe	A small number of sheep in one medium flock and one sheep in one small flock.	Southern Tasmania	Curved separation of hoof wall from sole up hoof wall near front of hoof.	Conformational defect rather than a disease condition. Is heritable and can be selected against but nutritional and other factors influence expression. Best to pare off under-run hoof wall as dirt and manure can pack into the cleft and cause a form of toe abscess.
Straining to urinate and defecate after difficult birth	One ewe in one small flock	NW Tasmania	Tissue damage and swelling due to large lamb being stuck in pelvis for some time.	Anti-inflammatory treatment under veterinary supervision with antibiotic cover as well may reduce swelling and pain. If nerves have been damaged, the ewe may take some weeks to recover fully.
Sulpha responsive scours	Weaners in one large flock	Northern Tasmania	Egg counts zero but scouring.	Coccidia, Yersinia, and Campylobacter enteritis can cause scouring in young sheep, may not always be detected by culturing faecal samples and may respond to Sulpha drugs or antibiotics under vet supervision. Also possibly dietary – low dry matter content in pasture, or plants such as capeweed. Micronutrient deficiencies can be involved as well. Can also be immature worm infestation not yet producing eggs.
Swollen joints in adult sheep	A number of ewes in one large flock	Northern Tasmania	Swelling of tissues around joints rather than infected joint.	A heavy worm burden was involved and the swelling may have been oedema due to low blood protein levels.
Vaccination lesions	A high proportion of sheep vaccinated with footrot vaccine in one large flock. A single sheep in one small flock.	Northern Tasmania	Oily vaccines such as Footrot vaccines, Campyvax and Gudair often produce a large reaction under the skin.	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 Keep needles sharp and clean, rest needle end of vaccinator in 70% alcohol in between sheep.
Vaginal prolapse	A number of ewes in two large flocks.	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 few weeks of pregnancy, keep BCS 3 to 3.3. Offer calcium supplements in late pregnancy. Don't feed 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.
Wool break	Small numbers of sheep in a number one	Northern 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.

	large and one small flock.			
Worms	A number of flocks.	NW, Northern and Southern Tasmania	Some very high counts and deaths seen, even in 4T wethers. Brown stomach worm in some deaths. Barbers pole worms seen in some larval ID tests.	One breakdown due to under-dosing due to a kink in the tubing between the drench pack and the gun. Massive larval pickup by lambing ewes on some heavily contaminated paddocks. Differentiate from nutritional scour or coccidia by WORMTEST or total worm count (at post mortem by vet or lab). 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				
Abortion	One cow in one herd	Southern Tasmania	Possible causes Pestivirus, neospora, leptospirosis, trichomoniasis, vibrio (Campylobacter), pestivirus, congenital/hereditary factors, toxins, mouldy hay, Salmonella Dublin, iodine deficiency. The cause of many abortions not determined despite lab investigation.	Postmortem on farm or send aborted calf and blood sample from cow to lab for diagnosis. Vaccines against Vibrio and pestivirus can be used. Pestivirus: https://www.mla.com.au/research-and-development/animal-health-welfare-and-biosecurity/diseases/reproductive/pestivirus/ Vibrio: https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0009/110043/vibriosis-of-cattle.pdf
Actino abscesses	A number of cattle in one large herd	Northern Tasmania	Swellings usually around head/upper neck, usually after damage to mouth due to coarse feed etc.	Outbreaks of Actino are rare but several outbreaks have occurred in Northern Tasmania. Actino abscesses can be treated by a vet.
Blood clot in lung	One newborn calf in one large herd	Southern Tasmania	Found by laboratory	Significance in relation to cause of death of calf is unknown.
Boney lump	One heifer in one small herd	Northern Tasmania	This one below eye. Probably an injury, 'lumpy jaw' usually seen lower.	Observe regularly to see whether lump is enlarging. If enlarging, it may be worth accessing veterinary involvement.
Chorioptic mange	A high proportion of cattle in many small, medium and large herds.	NW, Southern and Northern Tasmania	Hair loss around tail head and pins at the early stage, then thighs, flanks and top of neck later. Rough scaley skin.	More common as winter progresses then self-heals over spring. 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

			Diagnosis by skin scraping.	
Corkscrew claw	Two cows in one large herd	Northern Tasmania	Outside claw on hind leg grows up off ground in corkscrew form	Conformational fault, genetic cause. Cull.
Corkscrew penis	One bull in one large herd	Southern Tasmania	Penis in corkscrew form when trying to serve	Can be genetic cause. Usually unable to mate. Cull.
Corneal damage	One bull in one small herd	Southern Tasmania	This one caused by grass seed	Protect eye, vet may give antibiotics and anti-inflammatories.
Corneal scarring	One cow 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.
Cough in young cattle	Several yearlings in one small herd	Northern Tasmania	Can be due to lungworms or viral diseases that infect the respiratory tract.	Treat with drench that kills lungworm. Antibiotic cover under veterinary supervision if show signs of pneumonia.
Dags	A number of cattle in a number of small and medium herds.	NW, Northern and Southern Tasmania	Dried faeces stuck on tail hair.	Previous scour. Worms, diet, bacterial and viral diseases can all be involved.
Deformed calves	Two calves in one large herd	Southern Tasmania	One with two hooves on one foot, one 'looked like ET'	Hereditary factors or sometimes viral infections of the cow during pregnancy can be the cause. Your vet can advise on which is likely and whether to cull the cow. Always take a photo of the deformity.
Dummy calves	Several calves in one large herd	Southern Tasmania	Born alive but would not suck.	May be due to Pestivirus, Campylobacter, micronutrient deficiencies, viral diseases. Postmortem best for diagnosis.
Dystocia (difficult birth)	One heifer and one first calf heifer in one large herd	Southern Tasmania	Calf not delivered within 3 hours of start of birth process.	Heifers should generally be 300kg+ at mating and grow at up to 1 kg per day in last third of pregnancy. Need to be observed frequently over calving period. Assist if no progress after 3 hours. Don't overfeed cows in last third of pregnancy as calf can grow very large.
Hair loss over both hips	One cow in one large herd	Northern Tasmania	May have been lifted with a hip hoist.	Use padding when lifting thin cows with hip hoist. Treat by applying local antiseptic skin treatments.
Knee swollen	One heifer in one small herd	Northern Tasmania	Could be soft tissue or bone reaction.	May be from trauma, old joint infection.
Knee cut	One cow in one small herd	Northern Tasmania	Possibly due to collision with sharp object in yards.	Treat with antiseptic spray if superficial. May need vet attention if knee joint could be involved. Prevention by removing sharp projections in yards.
Nasal discharge, purulent (snotty)	Widespread mostly in young cattle	NW, Northern and Southern Tasmania	Could be caused by a number of respiratory viruses and bacterial infections or allergy.	If 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)	A 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 pinkeye.	May not be possible to remove from irritants. Observe again later to make sure pinkeye is not developing.
Pestivirus	One dead newborn calf in one large beef herd.	Southern Tasmania	Pestivirus can cause permanently infected (PI) runt calves that die at birth or grow poorly and usually die by 18 months of age.	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- 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/2022/11/National-Cattle-Health-Declaration_Fillable_2022.pdf
Photosensitisation	1 cow in one small herd	Northern Tasmania	Skin peels off areas with little hair or white hair.	May be caused by Acute Bovine Liver Disease (ABLD), blue-green algae on dams, Facial Eczema, poisonous plants. Remove from paddock, provide deep shade to protect from sunlight. Multivitamin injections, antibiotic cover if necessary.
Pinkeye, winter	Severely affecting a number of cattle in one large and one medium herd.	Northern Tasmania	Discharge from both eyes usually, rapid development. Highly contagious within group. Front of eye may get cloudy, ulcerated, middle of eye can go yellow, eye can rupture.	Winter pinkeye often caused by *Moraxella bovoculi*, different from summer pinkeye caused by *Moraxella bovis*. May require whole herd treatment, talk to your vet. Start treatment early. Separate affected cattle, use eye creams, antibiotic injection into eyelids, eye patches or vet can stitch eyelids. There is a vaccine available that covers most of the strains of pink eye bacteria that occur in Tasmania, but does not cover *Moraxella bovoculi*. See: https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0017/103904/pinkeye-in-cattle.pdf In one of these herds both *Moraxella bovoculi* and *Moraxella bovis* were cultured.
Ringworm	A number of young cattle in a number of herds	NW, Northern and Southern Tasmania	Scaley circular areas of hair loss with thick whitish crust usually around head and neck.	Usually heal up eventually if left alone. Antifungal ointments or iodine can be rubbed into lesions. Can spread to people so precautions must be taken.
Runty weaners	Two calves in one small herd	Northern Tasmania	May be due to Pestivrus or under-nutrition.	Calves that are infected at 30-120 days of pregnancy may be persistently infected and usually do not grow well and die before 18 months of age. Blood or skin tests can detect such PI calves. Late born early-weaned calves or orphaned calves may also be undergrown at weaning.
Stillbirths	A small number of calves in one mob of cows in one large beef herd	Southern Tasmania	Calves born dead	Can be due to dystocia, Pestivirus, Neospora, Leptospirosis, Vibrio and some other infections as well as some micronutrient deficiencies, fungal infections/toxins. Postmortem sampling can detect some of these causes, blood sampling cows can sometimes detect antibodies if a disease is involved.
Sudden death	Several yearlings in one large herd.	Northern Tasmania	May be caused by pulpy kidney, ABLD, blackleg, plant poisoning, bloat, snake bite, Anthrax.	Best to have postmortem carried out. Ensure Clostridial vaccination up to date, check for poisonous plants, legumes. If blood from nose/mouth/anus could be anthrax so contact vet or ring hotline on 1800 675 888.

Uterine prolapse and down	One cow in one herd	Southern Tasmania	Seen just after calving. Is usually due to milk fever.	Inject calcium to correct milk fever, replace uterus and suture to keep in. Vet job.
Warts	Widespread	NW, Northern and Southern Tasmania	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.
Warts on penis	A number of young bulls in one large herd and one bull in one medium herd	Northern and Southern Tasmania	Cauliflower-like growth on penis.	Seen in young bulls at bull fertility testing. Will normally self-cure if left alone. Apply rubber ring and pain relief if it has a narrow base. A vaccine can be made up if warts persist or are very extensive.
ALPACAS and CAMELS				
Dog attack	Two young alpacas in one small herd	Southern Tasmania	Dogs attacked youngest animals in herd	Alpacas used to defend other livestock will usually ward off dogs but these were pets and ran.
GOATS				
Anaemia and bottle jaw	One young goat in one small herd	Southern Tasmania	Recent ivermectin treatment but probably due to barbers pole worm	Goats break down many veterinary drugs especially drenches faster than sheep, so special dose rates are required. This is 'off-label' use, so your vet needs to be involved and provide an advice note specifying the correct dose rate.
Coccidiosis	A large number of kids in one large herd	Southern Tasmania	Seen as sudden deaths with no scour and little to see on postmortem.	Kids in contaminated pens were fed milk replacer with monensin (an additive that should control coccidia) but still died from acute coccidiosis. When changed to milk replacer without monensin, they died in even greater numbers.
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 feed 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 postmortem investigation (https://animalhealthaustralia.com.au//wp-content/uploads/dlm_uploads/2024/09/Bucks-for-Brains-Brochure.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 $272 million worth of sheep meats and wool in 2021-22. See:
https://nre.tas.gov.au/agriculture/multifaceted-agriculture/facts-figures/tasmanian-agri-food-scorecards?_kx=dugXLaA5GP87nVpXBiMvfbcx1KKhlEXkNp9EA0v_Z_M.TidPmQ

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/