# Tasmanian Livestock Health Report – February 2026

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-April.

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 rough dog's tail weed, so that cattle can graze safely this autumn.
**Arthritis in lambs**: If you have more than the odd case it may be worth asking your vet about testing for Erysipelas as there is a vaccine for Erysipelas but not for other causes of arthritis.
**Barber's pole worm (BPW):** This is now the prime BPW period, not just on irrigated pastures. Watch for anaemia, bottle jaw, exercise intolerance, high worm egg counts. The NRE Animal Health Laboratory offers a Rapid Lectin test that tells you what proportion of the worm eggs detected are BPW. The Rapid Lectin test result is available the day after the egg count. Do an egg count every 3 weeks if you have an established problem.
**Bloat:** is a risk in lambs on lucerne or clover on misty overcast days.
**Blue-green algae:** being seen on dams now and can cause photosensitisations and deaths.
**Brown stomach worm**: more common in summer and are poor egg producers so worm egg counts may be low while significant burdens are present.
**Campylobacter abortion in sheep**: The campylobacter vaccine course or booster should ideally be completed before joining, but there is a shortage at present, so as rams go in and/or come out is next best. Another common cause of abortion in Tasmania is Toxoplasmosis but there is no vaccine available for it in Australia.
**Drench resistance**: resistance to white, clear, macrocyclic lactone (ML) drenches and some combinations is relatively common and any other drench can also fail.
**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 in autumn, March is the worst month, mainly in dairy cattle but sheep can be affected too.
**Footrot and scald**: Spreading now on irrigation.
**Flystrike:** Cases are occurring now.
**Liver fluke**: Eggs can be detected in Fluketests, but immature fluke can also be migrating through livers now, so blood tests may be the best way to detect liver fluke in live animals and triclabendazole the best treatment for immature fluke, unless resistance is present.

**Lucerne red gut**: seen as sudden death with a bloated carcase in lambs on lucerne or clover. Offering roughage such as hay, straw or alternating between pasture and the lucerne/clover, or a run-off pasture block can help prevent cases.
**Nematodirus:** are active over the next few months in weaners. Scouring, sub-optimal growth rates, and some Nematodirus eggs in the egg count justify a drench.
**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.
**Pulpy kidney (PK):** Make sure lambs vaccinated more than 3 months previously get a booster if going onto rich feed such as clover, lucerne or a significant amount of grain. 3-in-1 is cheaper than 5- or 6-in-1 and may give better PK immunity.
**Ram check:** Check your ram's testes, teeth, feet and condition score. Consider some high protein supplement in the 8 weeks lead up to mating.
**Ryegrass staggers**: Can be seen from now on. Plan to place weaners on paddocks with no history of staggers.
**Scabby mouth:** in lambs on feet and mouth.

## Biosecurity story of the month – Footrot, entry quarantine and Sheep Health Declarations

Some ewes were purchased by two Tasmanian buyers on Auctions Plus late last year and lameness was noticed in February. A veterinarian examined the sheep, took swabs, and footrot was confirmed. One buyer had kept the purchased ewes isolated, but the other had mixed them in with resident sheep.

The buyer who had isolated the ewes has a stronger case to claim that the ewes were already infected when purchased, rather than infected after arrival, whereas the other buyer has a weaker claim and a much larger eradication task ahead.

Insist on seeing a completed Sheep Health Declaration (SHD) before introducing sheep from any source, including through Auctions Plus.

Irrespective of what has been declared on the SHD, walk sheep through a footbath as they are unloaded if possible and keep them isolated from all other sheep for at least 2 weeks, but longer if possible. Always inspect them within 48 hours of arrival and if there is any suspicion of a transmissible disease such as ovine brucellosis (in rams), body lice or footrot, notify Auctions Plus, the agent or vendor immediately and make sure a veterinarian attends within 7 days to confirm the diagnosis.

Give a quarantine drench on entry and have a worm egg count done 14 days later to make sure it worked. Treat for lice and liver fluke if necessary, consider vaccination for OJD and Campylobacter if not previously vaccinated.

If you see any condition that you are not familiar with in any livestock or wildlife, especially recent introductions, ring your vet or the EAD Hotline on 1800 675 888.

## Diseases and conditions seen in February 2026

| SHEEP | | | | |
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| **Disease/condition** | **Number of reports/ cases** | **Region** | **Details** | **Prevention, treatment, and other biosecurity advice or measures** |
| Abortion/stillbirths/ lowered lambing % | A number of abortions and still-births seen in 1 large flock 2 years ago. | Northern Tasmania | Ewes had been vaccinated twice with Campy vaccine as ewe lambs but not since. No lab diagnosis on aborted lambs. | MA ewes booster vaccinated last year and testing now shows that antibody levels are still high 12 months later. |
| Anoestrus (no interest in rams) in ewes | Composite ewes in one large flock | Southern Tasmania | Little mating activity when rams introduced. | Ewes with a high proportion of British breed blood may not start cycling until autumn. Using certain veterinary drugs under veterinary supervision or teasers for 10 days before the rams are introduced may get them cycling. |
| Arthritis infectious | Two lambs in one medium flock | Southern Tasmania | Swollen knees post-marking. 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 under veterinary supervision may work. If Erysipelas is diagnosed in the flock, then use Erysipelas vaccine. See fact sheet on: https://sheepconnecttas.com.au/disease-factsheets/ |
| Body condition score low | A small number of sheep in two medium flocks | Northern Tasmania | Body condition less than BCS 2 | Usually not enough feed. Worms, fluke, broken mouth, OJD, cancer and specific deficiencies and diseases eg footrot may also be involved. |
| Cough | Several lambs in two small to medium flocks. | Northern 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. |
| Cud stain | One sheep on one medium property | Northern Tasmania | Green stain around mouth. | May be due to erupting teeth in young sheep, grass seed injury to tongue, other mouth injuries or nerve damage, lost molars in old sheep. |
| Broken mouth | 5% of 5.5-year-old ewes in one large flock and one ewe in one small flock. | Northern Tasmania | Incisor teeth worn down to gums, or some incisors missing. Molar teeth can also be missing, loose, food impaction. | Cull if condition score starting to decrease in comparison to younger ewes. Some breeds experience rapid tooth wear and ewes should be cast for age earlier than usual. Nutrition (especially calcium/phosphorus) and close grazing of sandy soils can be factors as well. |
| Dags | A relatively small number of | NW, Northern and | Due to scouring. Most due to green | 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 |

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| | lambs and ewes in a number of flocks. | Southern Tasmania | grass after recent rain and worms. Some ewe mobs showing signs of worms. | 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. |
| Deaths in wethers on a bush run | A number of wethers in one large flock | Southern Tasmania | OJD, plant poisoning, liver fluke, worms, malnutrition all possible. | Wethers on bush runs should be checked regularly. |
| Dermo (lumpy wool) | One young sheep in one large flock | Northern Tasmania | Wool in hard blocks along 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 the skin. See: *DPI - Lumpy wool fact sheet.* |
| Drench failure | One large flock | Southern Tasmania | Egg counts reduced by less than 95% 14 days after drenching with a triple. | This result needs to be followed up to confirm whether it is drench resistance. See your vet and WORMBOSS for strategies to manage and prevent drench resistance. |
| Ear cancer | Two aged sheep in two large flocks | Northern Tasmania | Crusty swelling or ulceration starting anywhere on bare parts of the ear. | Vet can remove the cancer if caught early enough. Check no swelling of the gland (lymph node) that drains that area as cancer can spread to the gland. Make sure it is 'fit to load' if transported. |
| Ear deformed in ram | One case in one medium flock | Northern Tasmania. | One ear wrinkled and irregular. | Usually starts as a blood clot (haematoma) that forms between the layers of the ear due to fighting with other rams. Usually OK if just left to heal (ear will end up looking deformed), or surgical drainage in early stage (see vet) |
| Flystrike | Several sheep in a number of flocks. | NW, Northern 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 wet, grey areas of wool, tail flicking, separation from mob, lying down. The AWI web site has a large number of resources and AWI runs workshops on flystrike. See: https://www.wool.com/simplifly |
| Foot abscess (heel abscess) | One ewe affected in one large flock. | Northern Tasmania. | Swelling of one toe, hot, painful and discharge pus in acute stage. Most in healing phase now. | 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, keep feet dry eg on slatted floor of shearing shed, epsom salts on drainage point and bandage. Ensure fit to load if transported. |
| Footrot, virulent | Chronic cases in 20% of sheep in two medium flocks and lower proportions in three large flocks. | Northern and Southern Tasmania | Spread is under way now on irrigated pastures. | Too late to attempt eradication this year. Pare, footbath, vaccinate, treat (see your vet if you want to use antibiotics) or cull chronic cases, and move cured 'chronics' to the prime lamb mob. 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* |

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| Footrot (intermediate) | Two large flocks | Northern 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, use of vaccine. Eradication by repeated foot inspections and culling all infected sheep too late to be executed this 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 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 |
| Footsore | One young sheep in one large flock | Northern Tasmania | Sheep yarded on concrete. Reluctant to walk on both hind feet. | Examine feet for other conditions. Rest in soft surfaced yards or paddocks. Treat with anti-inflammatories and maybe antibiotics under veterinary supervision. |
| Fractured leg, healed | One sheep in one small flock | Northern Tasmania | Leg at abnormal angle, not bearing full weight. | This one probably would continue to heal. |
| Fused heels | One sheep in one large flock | Southern Tasmania | Heels on both hind feet fused together | Congenital conformational defect. |
| Grain poisoning | One lamb in one large flock and a number of sheep in another large flock. | Southern and Northern Tasmania | Diarrhoea, dehydration, groaning, teeth grinding, death. | Remove grain and other rich feedstuff. Offer hay. Don't drench with bicarb, vet may administer other treatments. Euthanase if down and very depressed. |
| Grass seeds in eyes, mouth and under skin. | Several properties | Southern Tasmania | Grass seeds (usually barley grass) get under third eyelid and cause irritation of cornea (surface of eye) causing discharge down cheeks | Grass seeds must be removed manually from eye, then use a spay or ointment to control infection. Can also lodge in mouth and can be manually removed. Shear or wig sheep to reduce seed pickup. Barley grass can be controlled with strategic grazing, herbicides or slashing. |
| Growth rates slow in weaned lambs | Lambs in one medium flock | Northern Tasmania | Lambs not growing at historical rates. | Probably due to lack of high-quality green feed. Could be underlying undetected disease such as chronic pneumonia. pleurisy, worms, or micronutrient deficiency. Try increased supplementary feeding first. |
| Gummy ewe, low body condition score | One old ewe in one medium flock | Northern Tasmania | All incisor teeth have fallen out or worn down to gum level. | Cull. |
| Hooves overgrown, deformed | Several sheep in several 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. Lambs reared on milk replacer may have suffered from zinc or some other deficiency |
| Horn broken | One sheep in one large flock | Northern 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. |

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| Horn growing into head (in-grown horn) | One wether in one large flock | 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 around base of horn. |
| Impaction of grass between molar teeth and cheek | One ewe in one small flock | Northern Tasmania | Usually due to paralysis of cheek muscles due to vaccination in the space behind the jaw, or to loose/lost molar teeth | Check for loose molars and remove if you can. Always vaccinate under the skin on the side of the upper neck. |
| Inguinal hernia | One ram in one medium flock | Northern Tasmania | Swelling where scrotum joins body. | Could be repaired surgically but is probably hereditary so better to cull. |
| Lameness | A small number of sheep in a number of small flocks | Northern Tasmania | Reluctant to bear full weight on one or more feet. | 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. |
| Lameness with overgrown hooves | Several sheep in two small flocks | Northern Tasmania | Lame foot has long toes. | May be cause or effect. Often long toes caused by footrot or scald. |
| Lice (body lice) | Two large flocks | 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. | 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. |
| Lifeless, scour, deaths | Small number of lambs in one large flock | Southern Tasmania | Probably worms or gut infection. | Worm egg count and bacterial culture if egg count is low. |
| Liver fluke | Detected on an irrigated block for first time. | Southern Tasmania | Fluke eggs found in FLUKETEST in manure samples sent to laboratory after deaths. | Both mature and immature fluke at this time of year. Triclabendazole (if no resistance) 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/ |
| Mastitis, chronic | One ewe in one large flock. | Northern Tasmania | Hard sections in udder. | Abnormal liquid, from watery with white flakes to mayonnaise consistency, can be stripped out of teat. Chronic cases with hard udder should be culled as chances of rearing a lamb are low. |
| Mis-mated ewes | A number of ewes in one large flock | Northern Tasmania | Rams go to great lengths to mate at this time of year. | A veterinarian can use certain vet drugs to abort the ewes between 7 and 60 days after the contact with the ram. |
| Molar teeth loose, lost, incisors worn | One aged sheep in one small flock | Southern Tasmania | Gaps in row of molars can be felt through cheeks | Cull. |

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| Nasal discharge, purulent, both nostrils | Small numbers of sheep and lambs in a number of flocks, some with blood in discharge and some with cough. | 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. |
| Nose cancer in aged ewe | One case in one aged ewe in one small flock. | Northern Tasmania | Crusty growth or erosion on nose | Surgery not usually possible. Euthanasia. |
| Nose laceration | One sheep in one medium flock | Northern Tasmania | Probably dog bite but could be collision with sharp object in yards | Antiseptic spray if not too deep. Muzzle dogs, remove sharp projections in yards. |
| Ocular (eye) discharge, one eye | One sheep in one small flock. | Northern Tasmania | Most likely grass seed. | Control grass seeds with intensive rotational grazing, herbicide or topping. Grass seeds should be removed from eye as soon as possible and antibiotic cream applied. |
| PEM (polioencephalomalacia) | One lamb in one medium flock. | Northern Tasmania | 'Star gazing', blindness, other neurological signs, deaths | Usually associated with rich diet. Treat early with Vitamin B1 injections. Animal Health Australia subsidies may be available for post mortems on some neurological cases. |
| Photosensitisation | A small number of sheep in a large number of flocks. | NW, Northern and Southern Tasmania | Only backs of ears affected in most of these, face involved in one flock. Skin can peel off face, ears, around eyes and vulva. | 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 antihistamines and antibiotics if necessary, under veterinary supervision, offer deep shade, move to new paddock. |
| Pink eye | A small number of lambs from a number of flocks. | NW, Northern and Southern Tasmania | Discharge down cheeks, white areas on cornea of eye. Usually spread by flies, long grass and close contact (eg yarding) | 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. Eye ointments/sprays less effective. |
| Pizzle rot | One wether in one medium flock | Northern Tasmania | Scab on end of pizzle or whole sheath swollen | Bacterial infection usually associated with grazing wethers on legume-rich pastures. Prevented by testosterone injections or partial castration (see your vet). |
| Pneumonia | A number of cases in a large mob of lambs | Northern Tasmania | Coughing, deaths, difficulty breathing | Early cases in front part of lungs. Antibiotic treatment of cases, under vet supervision (best caught early). Reduce any stress factors. See https://animalhealthaustralia.com.au/wp-content/uploads/NSHMP-Pneumonia-Pleurisy.pdf |
| Poll injuries on rams | A number of rams in one large flock | Southern Tasmania | Fighting injuries | Normal behaviours especially in lead-up to joining. Use flystrike prevention. |
| Scrotal abscess | Two young rams in one medium flock | Northern Tasmania | Enlargement of one side of the scrotum | Vet performed surgery to provide drainage, curetted the abscess, flushed with antiseptic and provided antibiotic cover. |

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| Sebaceous gland blockage (sebaceous cyst) | Walnut sized swelling on rump of some aged shedding ewes in one large flock and in one Composite ram in one large flock. | Northern Tasmania | Gland which produces the oily layer on skin gets blocked and swells up. Usually on shedding sheep. | Usually harmless but can get infected or turn cancerous if it gets too large. Can be surgically drained or cut out by vet. |
| Shelly toe | One ewe in one medium flock | Southern Tasmania | Curved separation of hoof wall from sole up hoof wall near front of hoof. | Conformational defect rather than a disease condition. Nutrition and underfoot conditions can vary expression of the disease in the sheep. Has a heritable component and can be selected against. Best to pare off separated hoof wall as dirt and manure can pack into the cleft and cause a form of toe abscess. |
| Sunburnt mulesed tails | One case from one small flock | Northern Tasmania | Reddened skin of mulesed area. | Could also be photosensitisation from eating plants such as medics or storksbill or due to liver damage. Check gums for jaundice. Good nursing and provide good shade or protective skin cream. |
| Teste swollen | One ram in one small flock | Northern Tasmania | One enlarged testicle | May be due to infection or injury. Veterinary examination may be worthwhile. |
| Toxoplasma abortions | Significant numbers of abortions in ewe lambs every year | Northern Tasmania | Late abortions. | Toxo is spread by cats. For control strategies see: https://sheepconnecttasmania.files.wordpress.com/2013/04/sc-factsheet-no10-toxoplasmosis_lr.pdf |
| Udder dropped | Two ewes in two small flocks | Northern Tasmania | Ligaments holding udder up become stretched and udder hangs low even after lambs weaned | Cull. See https://www.mla.com.au/fittojoin for guidelines on assessing ewes after weaning to estimate their potential to potential to rear another lamb. |
| Water deprivation | Some sheep deaths in one large flock | Southern Tasmania | Accidentally locked in a laneway and 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. |
| Worms | A number of flocks. | NW, Northern and Southern Tasmania | Some high counts but generally counts are low to medium. High Nematodirus counts in some weaners. Black scour worm still dominant in larval cultures, brown stomach worm present. Barbers pole worms seen in some larval ID and Rapid Lectin tests. | Differentiate from nutritional scour or coccidia by WORMTEST or total worm count (at postmortem 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-lambing drenched ewes. See the *WORMBOSS sheep worm control program*. |
| CATTLE | | | | |

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| Blindness in both eyes | One cow presented at an abattoir. | Northern Tasmania | Pink eye scars on both eyes. | Vendor suspended from quality scheme. Animal welfare penalties possible. |
| Bottle jaw | One cow in one large herd. | Northern Tasmania | Bottle jaw can be caused by Barber's Pole Worm (Haemonchus) or liver fluke or Johne's disease. | Diagnosis WORMTEST/FLUKETEST (manure sample test). Treat with effective drench. Blood test for Johne's disease. |
| Broken penis | One bull in one large herd | Northern Tasmania | Lump forming around penis in front of scrotum. | A vet may be able to help salvage such bulls. Make sure bull is 'fit to load' if sent to abattoir. |
| Copper deficiency | One large herd. | Northern Tasmania | Diagnosed with liver biopsy tests. Due to high soil sulphur levels in this case. | Deficiencies may reduce immunity to worms and other disease, reduce growth rates, cause brittle bones that break easily, faded coat colour, lowered fertility. Copper overdosing can be toxic in cattle though they are not as prone to poisoning as sheep, so supplement carefully – injections, rumen boluses or adding copper to fertiliser can all be used. Blocks don't ensure consistent intake, oral drenching time-consuming. |
| Eye cancer, pre-cancerous lesion. | One case in one medium 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. |
| Faded coat colour | A number of calves in one large herd. | Southern Tasmania | Can be due to copper and/or selenium deficiency. | These responded to a combined selenium/copper injection. |
| Foot abscess | Two steers in one medium herd | Northern Tasmania | Swollen foot, may discharge, very lame. Wet conditions. | May respond to antibiotics, under vet supervision, and move to dry area. Sometimes need surgical drainage and curette. |
| Footsore calves | A number of store calves from one medium herd | Northern Tasmania | Calved drafted in concrete yards and transported long distances. | Soft wet calf hooves wear quickly on concrete and can allow bacteria into the hoof causing infection and spread of infection through the body. Sore-footed cattle should be kept on soft surfaces and not transported long distances and may need antibiotic and anti-inflammatories under veterinary supervision. Calves with wet soft hooves should not be handled on rough concrete. |
| Hair loss back of pin bones | Several cows in two medium herds. | Northern Tasmania | Maybe due to riding each other when one is on heat. | Normal activity. |
| Hoof crack | One bull in one small herd. | Northern Tasmania | Crack runs from coronary band to bottom of hoof wall | Could be due to damage to coronary band as hoof grows from coronary band. Dietary deficiency and genetic factors possible. |
| Injury to hip | Several bulls and cows in several herds | Northern Tasmania | Can be hip arthritis, pelvic damage or dislocation | Cull. Make sure fit to load if transported. |
| Injury to shoulder | Several bulls and cows in several herds | Northern Tasmania | Can be joint, ligament or muscle injuries. | Cull. Make sure fit to load if transported. |

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| Nasal discharge | One steer in one medium herd | Northern 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. |
| Nasal discharge, bloody | One steer in one small herd | Northern Tasmania | Could be caused by a injury from a collision with a hard object. | If animal is otherwise bright and alert, just keep under observation. If any other signs of ill-health use antibiotics under veterinary supervision. Handle cattle calmly in yards. |
| Ocular (eye) discharge (clear, watery) | Several cows from a number of herds | NW, Northern and Southern Tasmania | Can be caused by an irritant such as flies, 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. |
| PEM (polioencephalomalacia) | Several growing cattle on one property. | Northern Tasmania | Caused by excess sulphur in diet in this case. | Cattle show nervous signs early in course of PEM and may be saved if treated really early with B1 (thiamine) injections. PEM is seen on crops or weeds with high sulphur content, or grain or rich feed eg brassica crop. Prevent by offering good quality hay. Can add thiamine to diet. Best to get a vet involved. If the vet does a postmortem and takes the brain you may be eligible for a $300 subsidy (see https://animalhealthaustralia.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Bucks-for-Brains_Jun16_WEB.pdf |
| Pinkeye | A small number of cases in two small herds | Northern Tasmania | Discharge from both eyes usually but may be only one. Watery, then may become purulent. Front of eye may get cloudy, ulcerated, middle of eye can go yellow, eye can rupture. | 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 pinkeye bacteria that occur in Tasmania. For further information, see the *NSW DPI Pinkeye in cattle fact sheet*. |
| Poverty line in hooves | One cow in one small herd | Northern Tasmania | A horizontal line in all 4 hoof walls. | Caused by sudden change in nutrition or an illness that interferes with formation of hoof horn. |
| Preputial prolapse | One bull in one large herd | Southern Tasmania | Soft tissue of sheath hangs out. If injured while out, becomes swollen and can't go back in. | A veterinarian may be able to operate even if damaged. |
| Prostatitis | Two bulls in one large herd | Southern Tasmania | Very poor semen quality and very sensitive prostate glands on rectal palpation. | Antibiotic and antibiotic treatment under veterinary supervision. |

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| Selenium deficiency | One large herd | Northern Tasmania | History of slow growth rate etc combined with low blood or liver levels. Associated with high soil sulphur levels in this case. | Deficiency is widespread in Northern and Southern Tasmania and the Bass strait Islands. Deficiency can cause white muscle disease (rare but does occur in calves), slow growth rates in young cattle, reduced immunity to footrot and other diseases, reduced fertility, faded coat colour. Young cattle don't always grow faster under treatment even when blood selenium levels are low, so only treat if there is a production reason. See https://www.agric.wa.gov.au/feeding-nutrition/selenium-deficiency-cattle |
| Skin abrasions around eye | One steer in one small herd | Northern Tasmania | Hair and skin was scraped off right around one eye. | Probably a traumatic injury. Antiseptic spray. |
| Stifle injury | One bull in one large herd | Southern Tasmania | Ligaments or joint surfaces damaged. | Treatment unlikely to be effective if some time since original injury. Make sure fit to load if transported. |
| Tongue rolling | One steer in one large herd. | Northern Tasmania | Constantly moving tongue, possibly due to foreign body or irritation | Examine mouth for foreign body or irritated area. |
| Torn flexor muscles in front leg | One bull in one large herd | Southern Tasmania | Front leg could not be folded under and could not stand. | Got bogged and injured muscles trying to get out. Cull. |
| Warts | One steer 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. |
| **ALPACAS and CAMELS** | | | | |
| No cases reported | | | | |
| **GOATS** | | | | |
| Foot problems | Several goats in several herds | NW, Northern and Southern Tasmania | Goats can get footrot, scald, interdigital dermatitis and other foot conditions. | Footrot is handled similar to sheep – see *Ute Guide for Tasmania* |
| Oedema disease (big head) | One buck in one small herd. | Southern Tasmania | Clostridial infection confirmed by lab. | Vaccinate goats with 5 in 1 vaccine every 6 months to prevent Clostridial diseases including pulpy kidney and oedema disease. |
| Scour | One 4 month old kid in one herd | NW Tasmania | Worms most likely but coccidia common in this age group, plus other gut infections possible. | Collect faeces for egg count and coccidia check, culture if negative for worms and coccidia. See your vet and WORMBOSS for strategies to *manage and prevent drench resistance.* |
| **PIGS** | | | | |
| Castration | A number of pigs over 21 days of age | Southern Tasmania | Must be castrated by a veterinarian if | Veterinarian will use anaesthetics. |

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|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | over 21 days of age. | |
| **POULTRY** | | | | |
| No cases reported | - | - | - | - |
| **DEER** | | | | |
| Bald area on body | One doe in one herd | Southern Tasmania | Large area of skin with virtually no hair and with a fairly sharp border with normally haired areas. | Thought to be a hereditary condition as no mites or ringworm fungus have been found by laboratory examination and usually only seen in wild deer in certain parts of Tasmania. Cull affected animals. |
| Scrotal infections | A number of male fawns in one herd | Southern Tasmanian | Five in 1 vaccination practiced and rubber rings applied after soaking in disinfectant. | Antibiotic cover under veterinary supervision as rings are applied. |
| **WORKING DOGS** | | | | |
| Abscess | One cattle dog | Northern Tasmania | Bitten by another dog. Swelling under jaw. | Surgical draining and curette by veterinarian. |
| Encephalitis/meningitis | One Kelpie pup in one large group. | Northern Tasmania | Nervous signs and high white blood cell count. | Needs to be differentiated from cerebellar abiotrophy (a hereditary condition) in Kelpie pups. Treated with long course of antibiotics under veterinary supervision. |
| Tumour | One Border Collie in one medium group | Southern Tasmania | Soft round pendulous tumour hanging under tail. | Vet may take sample of cells using a syringe and needle to determine whether benign (leave alone, monitor) or malignant (remove). |
| Wound | One Kelpie dog | Northern Tasmania | Collison with sharp object | Stitching by vet is best but can heal slowly if any exudate that forms can escape easily. Monitor for signs of infection. |

## 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/