Tasmanian Livestock Health Report – March 2026

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

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

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

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

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

Seasonal Disease Alerts

Acute bovine liver disease (ABLD): use sheep now to graze off paddocks that have a lot of 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. Do a worm egg count before and 14 days after a drench (Drenchcheck) to check that your current drench is working.
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, deer and beef cattle can be affected too.
Footrot and scald: Spreading now in sheep 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.
Parvo in working dogs: Parvovirus has been detected in most parts of Tasmania recently. Make sure all working dogs, especially those under 12 months of age, have current vaccination.
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.
Scabby mouth: in lambs on feet and mouth.

Biosecurity story of the month – most common diseases and conditions seen in sheep in 2025

Internal parasites: black scour worm has remained the dominant parasite. Nematodirus was a common problem in autumn in weaners, and barber's pole worm is becoming more widespread with more persistent and damaging outbreaks. Brown stomach worm was associated with heavy lambing ewe losses in some instances. Drench resistance is common for white, clear and abamectin anthelmintics while triple actives are generally still effective, although some cases of failure were recorded.

Dags: were commonly seen, usually on a small proportion of a mob, but with higher proportions when internal parasites and lush green feed have resulted in diarrhoea.

Epididymitis: was common in rams, all tested negative for ovine brucellosis.

Pink eye: appeared to be a more significant problem in weaner sheep.

Photosensitisation: was very common. Most cases were mild and only affected the backs of ears and are most likely due to ingestion of plants like stork's bill (Erodium).

Foot abscess: still a significant problem in wetter areas.

Footrot: was less prevalent in the south of the state due to the drier conditions but common in the north. Most isolates tested as virulent. The M serogroup is still prevalent on one large property. Benign footrot ("scald") appeared to be very common. Lameness and deformed/overgrown feet are common.

Reproduction losses: including abortion and significant neonatal losses, with Campylobacter and Toxoplasma confirmed in a number of flocks. A significant number of flocks recorded lower than normal lamb marking percentages. Neonatal lamb deaths from exposure were consistent right through spring due to constant strong winds.

Flystrike: is still common and one flock reported a reduced protection period after cyromazine use.

Ovine Johne's disease (OJD): significant losses were experienced in a number of flocks that had not vaccinated any sheep or had not vaccinated wethers. Most properties that vaccinate have very low losses of adult sheep as the vaccine claims to reduce disease by 90%. The local sheep abattoir reports an increase in condemnations of diseased runners that otherwise would be a valuable co-product. The vaccine has become even more

expensive, and many producers have considered stopping vaccination as a result. However, compared to losing 10% of adult sheep each year, vaccination is still a very good investment.

Dermatophilosis ('dermo', '**lumpy wool'**): was still common and is still responding to treatment.

Vaginal prolapse: has also been a significant problem in some flocks but calcium supplementation of ewes in late pregnancy appears to have helped in at least some flocks.

Redgut/sudden death on irrigated legumes: has been a major concern for producers finishing lambs on irrigated lucerne and clover. An MLA producer demonstration site (PDS) project has been initiated to study the problem, and results confirm that most sudden deaths in lambs on irrigated legumes are due to redgut and that feeding more roughage is protective.

Sheep body lice: appeared to be more common.

Respiratory disease: was very common with coughing and nasal discharge common in young sheep at saleyards. *Mycoplasma ovipneumoniae* was confirmed as a cause of a hacking cough in one flock. Lungworm were detected in adult sheep a number of times.

Low body condition score: was observed more frequently during the dry period of the year, but generally producers maintained most sheep in adequate body condition, and some cases were probably due to OJD brought on by nutritional and late pregnancy stress.

Scrotal mange: still very common in both flock and stud rams.

Hypocalcaemia ('milk fever"): was common in late pregnancy as usual but seemed much more prevalent in lactating ewes this year. Feeding limestone/causmag/salt loose licks has been a successful preventative in a number of cases.

Ryegrass staggers and Phalaris toxicity appeared less common but were still significant for some individual producers:

Scabby mouth: may have been less common. Vaccine failures have been reported: - application instructions must be followed to the letter and the 'take' checked at 10 days after marking.

Two diseases were identified that may not have been recorded in Tasmania previously:

Border disease (hairy shaker lambs): a significant outbreak was recorded in Tasmania.

Coccidia: *Eimeria gilruthii* was associated with significant mortality in adult ewes on one property.

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Diseases and conditions seen in March 2026

SHEEP				
Disease/condition	**Number of reports/ cases**	**Region**	**Details**	**Prevention, treatment, and other biosecurity advice or measures**
Abscess	One sheep in one small flock	Southern Tasmania	Flystrike of ruptured abscess.	Surgical draining and antibiotics by veterinarian usually effective. Flystrike prevention too at this time of year.

Acidosis (grain poisoning), subacute.	A number of sheep off feed in one large mob	Southern Tasmania	Introduced to containment, feeding rate increased, buffer pellets introduced later.	Mostly just not eating, some with slight "porridge" scour. Take off grain source and feed roughage. Oral penicillin may help.
Barbers pole worm	A number of sheep in one medium and one large flock	Northern and Southern Tasmania	Bottle jaw and pale gums in one flock, larval ID on Wormtest in another.	See WORMBOSS website for details on diagnosis, control and prevention programs.
Bent leg in young sheep	One lamb in one small flock	Northern Tasmania	Young unshorn growing sheep in winter on cereal crop. Vitamin D deficiency	Give Vitamin D prior to placing young sheep on cereal crop. Offer loose lick containing limestone, magnesium and salt.
Black scour worm	A number of lambs in one large flock	Northern Tasmania	Poor growth rates. Scouring, high worm egg count, Trichostrongylus identified by larval ID test at lab.	Monitor young sheep closely, they can go downhill fast. Monitor with regular monthly WORMTESTs and go to 2-weekly tests if egg counts are rising rapidly. See WORMBOSS web site for good treatment and prevention strategies.
Body condition score low	A small number of sheep in a number of small and medium flocks	NW, Northern and Southern 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.
Bone infection (osteomyelitis)	One sheep in one small flock	Southern Tasmanian	Swollen jaw bone	Veterinarian may prescribe a prolonged course of antibiotics.
Broken mouth	20% of mixed age ewes in one medium flock and one ewe in one large 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.
Campylobacter abortion	A number of mixed aged ewes in one large flock.	Northern Tasmania	Blood tests showed bought-in ewes had not been vaccinated.	A vaccine is available and covers both strains of Campylobacter, but the course should be completed before joining. Aborting ewes can be run with unmated ewe weaners to give them immunity. Humans can also be affected so women of child-bearing age should not be exposed to aborting ewes or afterbirth.
Carcase doesn't 'set', bone marrow liquid	One aged, emaciated ewe in one small flock.	Southern Tasmania	Body fat within muscle and bone marrow not present to set hard as the carcase cools.	If fat reserves are totally exhausted, then carcase will not 'set', and bone marrow will remain liquid.
Coccidiosis in weaned lambs.	A number of lambs in one large flock.	Northern Tasmania	Scouring with medium to high coccidia count.	Usually respond well to sulpha drugs. Prevention by good nutrition and don't allow lambs to concentrate on damp areas in paddock.

Cough	A number of lambs in a number of small medium and large flocks.	NW, Northern and Southern Tasmania	Lambs cough, little response to lungworm drench.	If little response to lungworm drench, then probably an infection. May be virus, or bacteria such as Mycoplasma. Use antibiotics under veterinary supervision if production loss/deaths occur and postmortem indicates bacterial involvement.
Cud stain	One sheep in one medium flock	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.
Dags	A relatively small number of lambs and ewes in a number of flocks.	NW, Northern and Southern Tasmania	Due to scouring. Most due to green grass after recent rain and worms. Some ewe mobs showing signs of 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.
Deaths during transport	A number of sheep and lambs from a number of flocks.	NW, Northern and Southern Tasmania	Found dead or destroyed on unloading.	Many possible causes. Ensure sheep are fit to load and use correct loading density per pen to ensure sheep don't smother during transport.
Deformed hooves	One ewe in one small flock	Northern Tasmania	Hoof horn grows in an abnormal way	Damage to coronary band or inflammation due to scald/footrot. Genetics can also cause deformities.
Deformed front leg	One lamb in one medium flock	Northern Tasmania	Leg angled outwards and unstable	Most likely an injury to bones or ligaments of leg. Cull.
Deformed horns	Two wethers in one small flock.	Northern Tasmania.	Horns growing unevenly, left and right horns growing differently.	Dehorning must remove a ring of skin around base of horn.
Dermo (lumpy wool)	One young sheep in one small 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.*
Dermatitis patches in composite ewes	A small number of ewes in one large flock.	Northern Tasmania	Small patches of matted wool	Unlikely to be true lumpy wool. May be ringworm (rare) or cotted wool due to lice or localised skin inflammation.
Drench failure	One large flock	Southern Tasmania	Egg counts reduced by less than 95% 14 days after drenching with a moxidectin.	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	One aged sheep in one large flock.	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.
Eye cancer	One sheep in one large flock	Northern Tasmania.	Discharge down cheek, ulcerated and raw section of eyelid.	Older sheep with white eyelids. Cull as soon as noticed.

Flystrike	Several sheep in a number of flocks.	Southern Tasmania	Mainly breech and some body strike.	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
Flystrike preventative chemical resistance	A number of adjacent properties	Southern Tasmania	Cyromazine appears to be only giving 4 weeks protection	If you suspect chemical resistance contact Narelle Sales at: Direct T: 02 4640 6446 E: narelle.sales@dpi.nsw.gov.au
Flystrike scar	One case in one small flock	Northern Tasmania	Bare skin usually above tail or on body	Flystrike has damaged skin and wool has not grown back. Prevention: see the FLYBOSS website.
Foot abscess (heel abscess)	One ewe affected in one medium 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. Under vet supervision, 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	Low percentage of chronic cases in three large and one medium flock.	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*
Footrot (intermediate)	One large flock	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 but 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
Grain poisoning	One sheep in one small flock	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.
Growth rates slow in weaned lambs	Lambs in one large flock	Northern Tasmania	Lambs not growing at historical rates.	Can be due to lack of high-quality green feed. Could also be underlying undetected disease such as chronic pneumonia, pleurisy, worms, coccidia or micronutrient deficiency.
Gudair staggers	Three young ewes in one medium flock	Southern Tasmania	If vaccinated too close to topline, vaccine migrates down into spinal cord.	Cases can be seen for many months after vaccination. Prevention: vaccinate on side of neck just under the skin. – see https://www.zoetis.com.au/livestock-solutions/sheep/best-practice-videos/gudair.aspx
Hooves overgrown, deformed	Several sheep in one medium 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 large flock	Northern Tasmania	Horn broken and hanging down while handling in yards.	Complete removal. Pain relief under vet supervision if possible. Bleeds but usually heals quickly, Spray with antiseptic. Prevent fly strike and allow time to recover.
Lameness	A small number of sheep in one small flock.	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.
Lice (body lice)	Three large flocks	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.
Lumps, bare, in skin, on face	One ewe in one small flock	Northern Tasmania	Chronic thickened bare skin in some spots on face.	May be infection, injury/scar tissue. Keep under observation.
Meningitis	Several lambs in one large flock	Southern Tasmania	Convulsing	Bacterial infection, responded to veterinary treatment.
Nasal discharge, purulent, both nostrils	Small numbers of sheep and lambs in a number of flocks, 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.
Nematodirus	Weaners in several medium and large flocks	NW, Northern and Southern Tasmania	Weaners scour with poor growth rates. Nematodirus egg counts may or may not be high.	Nematodirus egg counts often do not reflect adult worm burden inside the weaners. Autopsy and total worm count or treat and look for response. See WORMBOSS web site for details on control.
PEM (polioencephalomalacia)	Several lambs in two large flocks.	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 postmortems on some neurological cases in sheep over 18 months of age.
Pendulous ("dropped") udder	One ewe in one small flock	Northern Tasmania	Udder hangs down lower than normal. Suspensory ligaments usually damaged.	Cull. Pet ewes can be pensioned off and not used for breeding.
Photosensitisation	A small number of sheep in two medium and two large 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 in 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 (under vet supervision). Eye ointments/sprays less effective.
Pneumonia	One ram in one medium flock	Southern Tasmania	Reluctance to walk, difficulty breathing	This ram responded to antibiotics and anti-inflammatories under veterinary supervision. Prevention: Reduce any stress factors. See https://animalhealthaustralia.com.au/wp-content/uploads/NSHMP-Pneumonia-Pleurisy.pdf
Reddened skin midline	One shorn lamb in one medium flock	Northern Tasmania	Wool thinned and reddened skin from shoulder level to elbow level.	Most likely a contact allergy from pushing through tall plants.
Redgut	A small number of deaths in three large flocks.	Northern Tasmania	Redgut on lucerne/clover. Seen as sudden death and rapid bloating. Dark red twisted intestines on postmortem.	Provide access to roughage.
Runts	A small number of lambs from three small flock	Northern Tasmania	Stunted lambs that are unlikely to grow out. May have been orphaned or suffered from illness.	Best euthanased but can try drenching, micronutrients and high protein/high energy feed (introduce slowly).
Ryegrass staggers	A small number of properties	Northern Tasmania	Usually young sheep - tremors, abnormal gait, may become downers, may convulse when disturbed. Often seek water and drown in dams. Can have high mortality.	See https://dpipwe.tas.gov.au/biosecurity-tasmania/animal-biosecurity/animal-health/sheep/perennial-ryegrass-staggers for details on diagnosis treatment and prevention.
Scabby Mouth	A small number of lambs in three medium flocks	Northern Tasmania	Crusts and raw areas on lips, sometimes on feet as well.	Caused by a tough virus that persists on a property once introduced, but skin injury needed to allow virus to establish. Best left to heal on their own. Can prevent with vaccine at marking. See: https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0006/179835/sheep-health-scabby-mouth.pdf
Selenium deficiency	A number of sheep in two large flocks	Southern Tasmania	Detected by blood or 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

Stag	One stag in one large flock	Northern Tasmania	One testicle retained in body.	Make sure both testicles are beneath the ring when marking.
Subacute ruminal acidosis	A number of ewes in one large flock	Southern Tasmania	A number of ewes recently placed in containment	Ewes initially ate well then went off feed. Amount of feed offered increased suddenly on entry and buffer pellets introduced several days later.
Sudden death of rams	A small number of rams in one large flock	Southern Tasmania	Rams found dead	Not likely to be fighting injury eg broken neck due to numbers. Re-vaccinate. Review grain feeding rates.
Sudden death of ewe weaner	One lamb in one medium flock	NW Tasmania	Weaner found dead	Oat/pea silage fed night before was mouldy. No more losses after mouldy silage replaced with a better-quality bale.
Sudden death of lambs in containment	Eight lambs in one large flock	Southern Tasmania	Weaners found dead morning after lucerne hay first offered.	Particular batches of lucerne hay can cause frothy bloat. Should be introduced slowly mixed with other roughages.
Sudden death of lambs on rape	A number of lambs in one large flock	Northern Tasmania	Weaners found dead.	Could be pulpy kidney, PEM, bloat, brassica anaemia, nitrate poisoning, pneumonia. A postmortem on a fresh carcase required to make a diagnosis.
Sudden death of lambs on various feeds	A small number of lambs in one large flock	Northern Tasmania	Weaners found dead. Some coughing in mob.	Pneumonia suspected. A postmortem on a fresh carcase required to make a diagnosis.
Sudden death of lambs on ryegrass and grain	A number of lambs in one large flock	Southern Tasmania	Weaners found dead, froth from mouth, not bloated.	Could be pulpy kidney, PEM, bloat, grain poisoning, pneumonia. A postmortem on a fresh carcase required to make a diagnosis.
Sudden deaths soon after drenching	A small number of ewes and lambs in one large flock	Southern Tasmania	Become disorientated, froth, go down, paddling of legs within minutes of drenching.	A postmortem did not show any drench in lungs, selenium levels normal. Drench had potassium iodide mixed in several months previously so there may have been a chemical reaction over summer.
Vaccination lesion	One ewe in one large flock	Northern Tasmania	Caused by vaccinating into the muscle, but some oily vaccines can produce a large lump even when injected under the skin. Dip needle in 70% alcohol between sheep.	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
Weakness in front legs	Several young rams in one medium flock	Northern Tasmania	Recovered after paddock move	Could be Gudair staggers, spinal abscess, toxicities, possibly genetic.
Worms	A number of flocks.	NW, Northern and Southern Tasmania	Some high counts but generally counts are low to medium.	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'

			High Nematodirus counts in some weaners. Black scour worm still dominant in larval cultures, brown stomach worm present. Barbers pole detected in some larval ID and Rapid Lectin tests.	paddocks for weaned lambs and pre-lambing drenched ewes. See the *WORMBOSS sheep worm control program*.
Yersinia enteritis	Suspected in scouring weaners in one large flock and detected at necropsy in one lamb.	Northern Tasmania	Scouring and deaths.	Differentiate from worms or coccidia etc by WORMTEST and 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. Yersinia can also be cultured as an incidental finding at necropsy or faecal culture.
CATTLE				
Abdominal distension in weaners	All calves in one group of purchased weaners in one small herd	Southern Tasmania	Calves purchased at 6 months old and placed on pasture composed of dead grass.	Most likely excess fluid in abdominal cavity caused by low protein/energy diet and/or worms and/or liver fluke. Treat for fluke and worms and make sure diet has plenty of protein and energy. Unlikely but could be due to chronic bloat. Vet may be able to diagnose and treat.
Balanitis (inflamed penis)	One bull in one large herd	Northern Tasmania	Low pregnancy rates at pregnancy testing.	Could be due to infectious bovine rhinotracheitis virus (IBR). Bull may recover with sexual rest. There is a vaccine against this virus.
Broken penis	One bull in one small herd	Southern 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.
Choke	One cow in one small herd	Southern Tasmania	Bloating, restless, drooling a lot of saliva	Due to a potato lodged in food pipe in this case. Veterinarian sedated cow and pushed potato through into the rumen with a stomach tube.
Conception delayed	Half of a mob of cows in one medium herd.	Southern Tasmania	Half of a mob of cows in good body condition conceived late in long mating period.	Could reflect plane of nutrition, deficiencies such as copper, selenium, or Vibrio infections where the early pregnancy fails and the cow re-conceives.
Condition score low	A number of cows in one small herd.	Southern Tasmania	Ribs showing in beef cattle, quite sunken between pins and tailhead in dairy cows	Possibly due to age/teeth, under-nutrition, fluke, worms or chronic disease. In this case cows in advanced pregnancy sold due to low feed reserves at home, so probably under-nutrition, but worms/fluke treatment advised.
Copper deficiency	One large herd.	Northern Tasmania	Diagnosed with blood tests. Associated with low pregnancy testing results.	Deficiencies may reduce immunity to worms and other disease, reduce growth rates, cause brittle bones in young growing cattle 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.

Dags	One steer in one small herd.	Northern Tasmania	Dried faeces stuck on tail hair.	Previous scour. Worm control, dietary control, viral diseases can all be involved.
Empty heifers at pregnancy testing	A number of heifers in one medium herd	Southern Tasmania	Could be vibrio, bull failure Pestivirus, possibly tri-trichomonas.	In this case probably due to short joining.
Epididymitis	One bull in one large herd	Northern Tasmania.	A lump is felt usually just under the testicle but can be on side or top.	Can be due to trauma or infection. Sperm usually can't get through. Bull may still be fertile if only affected on one side and other testicle and epididymis are in good order. Semen test or cull.
Freemartin	One heifer in one medium herd	Southern Tasmania	Infertility in twin heifer born with a bull calf brother.	Vet can diagnose by rectal palpation. Cull.
Hair loss back of pin bones	Several cows in one medium herd.	Northern Tasmania	Maybe due to riding each other when one is on heat.	Normal activity.
Inter-digital fibroma	Three bulls in two large and one small herd	Northern and Southern Tasmania	Crusty hairless mass protruded from top/front of interdigital cleft	Caused by wet conditions underfoot and excess spreading of toes. More common in bulls. A vet can surgically remove the mass.
Lameness	One bull in one large herd	Northern Tasmania	Hip, stifle or shoulder injuries, foot abscess, sub-solar abscess, etc	Remove bull from mob, rest in small paddock or yard, give anti-biotics and anti-inflammatories, check for leg and foot injuries and infections.
Liver fluke in cattle	A high proportion of cows in one large herd	Northern Tasmania	High liver fluke ELISA blood test results	Strategic treatments in autumn and late winter with effective flukicides depending on challenge. Keep stock off areas where fluke snail survives (dam edges, lagoons, areas that flood in spring) if possible. Sheep run on same areas will also need treatment. See; https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/114691/liver-fluke-disease-in-sheep-and-cattle.pdf
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 two small herds	Northern 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.

Penile adhesions	One bull in one large herd	Northern Tasmania	Penis is stuck to inside of sheath and can't extend fully.	May be secondary to injury or IBR infection. Vet may be able to do surgery, or cull.
Pestivirus	A number of cows in one large herd	Northern Tasmania	Associated with low pregnancy rates. Pestivirus can cause early resorption of foetus, abortions.	Herd status can be assessed by blood tests or milk tests. Persistently Infected (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/toolkit/declarations-and-statements/
Pinkeye	A proportion of cows in one medium herd	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*.
Pregnancy rates low	Rates from 0% to 50% in two large and one medium herd.	Northern and Southern Tasmania	A number of possible causes including bull failure, infectious diseases, nutritional deficiencies.	Best to have your veterinarian investigate.
Salivation, excessive	One heifer in one medium herd	Northern Tasmania	Excitable animal in a saleyard. No sign of interdigital lesions.	Handle cattle calmly using low-stress stock handling techniques.
Selenium deficiency	A number of cows in one medium and one large herd	Northern Tasmania	History of poor pregnancy rates.	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 foot abscess 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
Scouring adult bull	One bull in reasonable body condition with watery green scour in one small herd.	Northern Tasmania	May be nutritional but brown stomach worm, copper deficiency, Salmonella early Johne's disease etc	Worm egg counts do not always detect cattle with brown stomach worm problem, a blood test for fourth stomach lining damage (pepsinogen test) can be more accurate. Treat for worms if no response do some testing.

			could be involved.	
Seminal vesiculitis	One bull in one small and one large herd	Northen Tasmania	Internal sperm storage organ in bull's pelvis is inflamed. White blood cells and sometimes pus in semen sample.	Veterinary treatment can sometimes retrieve these cases.
Sperm motility low	One bull in one small herd	Northern Tasmania	Semen sample examined under microscope shows that sperm are not very active.	Can be due to temporary factors and some bulls can provide a strongly motile sample at retest later. But if the bull is old, infirm etc better culled. Bull can look well and have normal testicles and still have poor semen quality.
Stag	One stag in one large herd	Northern Tasmania	Steer with one retained testicle	Vet may be able to remove retained testicle but some are still up inside the body and cannot be easily removed.
Sub-fertile bull	One bull in one small herd	Southern Tasmania	Low % of cows in calf.	Probably a semen quality issue. Semen testing required.
Umbilical hernia	One newborn calf in one medium herd	Northern Tasmania	Large round lump hanging from navel.	Vet may be able to repair.
Vibrio (Campylobacter)	A number of cows from one large herd.	Northern Tasmania	Bacterial infection spread by bulls. Causes return to service and abortions.	Vaccinate bulls, complete course 4 weeks prior to joining. Cull empty females at preg testing and any female that aborts or not rearing a calf. If exposure to unvaccinated bulls is likely vaccinate females as well. See https://www.mla.com.au/research-and-development/animal-health-welfare-and-biosecurity/diseases/reproductive/vibriosis/
ALPACAS and CAMELS				
No cases reported				
GOATS				
Acidosis	One goat in one small herd	Northern Tasmania	Illness after eating grain	Any feed containing a lot of carbohydrate (including grains, fruit and vegetables) can cause the rumen contents to become acidic, and the goat becomes ill and in severe cases can die. Treatment: drench with alkaline solutions. Prevent: Introduce carbohydrate rich feeds gradually so that rumen can adjust.
Stones blocking urinary system	One goat	Northern Tasmania	Usually male animal becomes very depressed and may get big belly full of liquid ("water belly")	Sometimes a stone is stuck in tip of penis and can be squeezed out. Otherwise surgery can be attempted but often unsuccessful. Prevention usually depends on changing diet, usually by adding more calcium and a little salt to grain-based diets. Any stones recovered should be analysed so that diet can be changed to prevent stone formation. In this case urethra had ruptured.
PIGS				
Abscess	One weaner in one large herd	Southern Tasmania	Abscesses on forehead	Abscess drained and antibiotics administered by veterinarian.

Castration	A number of pigs over 21 days of age	Southern Tasmania	Must be castrated by a veterinarian if over 21 days of age.	Veterinarian will use anaesthetics.
Cough	A number of weaners in one large herd	Southern Tasmania	Can be due to pneumonia due to Mycoplasma, viral or bacterial infection	Treat with antibiotics under veterinary supervision.
Hernia, inguinal	One weaner in one large herd	Southern Tasmania	Intestines can come down into the scrotum.	Do not castrate. Vet can repair but probably not economical.
Lice	One large herd	Southern Tasmania	Sucking lice, large (4-6 mm long) and dark, seen in neck folds, ears and all over body in heavy infestations. Only survive a few days off pig.	A number of sprays, injections and in-feed medications can be used. Follow label instructions to break life cycle as many treatments do not kill the lice eggs which take some time to hatch so a second treatment at the correct interval is required.
Mange (sarcoptic)	Widespread in one large outdoor piggery	Southern Tasmania	Itching, rubbing against objects and crusting around ears.	A number of effective treatments are available.
Pneumonia	A small number of weaners in one large herd	Southern Tasmania	Glaesserella parasuis isolated. Negative to Mycoplasma by PCR	Glaesserella parasuis can also cause arthritis and meningitis in young pigs but not seen in this herd yet.
Runts	A very small number of weaners in one large herd	Southern Tasmania	A number of possible causes including orphans, chronic pneumonia, worms etc.	Treat underlying problems
Vas deferens enlarged	One weaner in one large herd	Southern Tasmania	Both vas deferens enlarged	Probably a congenital problem. Of no consequence unless animal has high genetic worth and to be used as a sire.
POULTRY				
Wheezing respiration	One hen in one small flock	Southern Tasmania	One year old hen with wheezing respiration	A number of viruses and bacteria can cause respiratory infections in chickens. A veterinarian may prescribe antibiotics.
DEER				
Vomiting and death.	Two stags in one small herd	Southern Tasmania	May have eaten mouldy grain.	Only feed fresh clean grain to deer. Remove uneaten grain in wet warm weather.
WORKING DOGS				

Paralysis tick	One kelpie pup	Southern Tasmania	Attached on neck. Removed. No paralysis.	*Ixodes cornuatis* is the Southern paralysis tick and usually only seen in Northern Tasmania but also identified on NW coast and now Southern Tasmania. Can cause paralysis and death. Dogs can be treated with long-acting spot-on insecticides that reduce chances of ticks attaching and surviving long enough to paralyse the dog.
Parvovirus	Reported in a number of dogs from around the state	Statewide	Vomiting diarrhoea, dehydration, death.	Vaccinate young dogs and maintain boosters as advised by veterinarian.
Urethral obstruction	One Kelpie pup in one litter.	Southern Tasmania	Uncomfortable, trying to urinate but only a few drips of urine.	Anaesthetised, catheterised and obstruction pushed back into bladder by vet. Antibiotics administered for cystitis.
Zinc footbath intoxication	One Kelpie cross dog	Southern Tasmania	Drank footbath solution	Vomited and recovered with fresh water drenching. Make sure fresh water is available for dogs near the footbath on hot days.

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/