

Tasmanian Livestock Health Report – July 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-September.

If you need more information on this project, please contact Bruce Jackson on 0407 872 520 or ria69392@bigpond.net.au

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

Seasonal Disease Alerts

Campylobacter, Listeria and Toxoplasmosis abortion in sheep: late abortions/stillbirths occurring now. 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: some high egg counts are being seen. Monthly worm egg counts on weaner sheep are recommended. Heavily pregnant and lactating ewes are also susceptible.

Body lice: in sheep. Good time to inspect.

Chorioptic mange in cattle: is well established in many herds.

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.

Footrot and scald: Spreading now.

Foot abscess: active now in heavy sheep. 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.

Goitre: may be a problem in wetter areas or if the ewes were fed brassicas in late pregnancy. Lambs do not always have a large swelling in the neck. Prevent by drenching with 300 mg of potassium iodide in water per ewe pre-lambing.

Hypocalcaemia (milk fever) in ewes: don't hold heavily pregnant ewes off feed for more than 12 hours. Also beware of ewes on cereal crops/lush feed with no dry roughage – feed some hay and/or a calcium/magnesium/salt dry lick. Have calcium injection on hand.

Listeria: nervous signs and deaths in sheep and cattle on silage, brassica bulbs or pasture.

Liver fluke: Eggs can be detected in Fluketests. Use an adult flukicide from a different flukicide family if you use triclabendazole in summer/autumn.

Milk fever: can be seen in early lactation dairy cows, especially older Channel Island breeds.

Nematodirus: are still causing problems in lambs. Scouring, sub-optimal growth rates, and some Nematodirus eggs in the egg count justify a drench.

Ovine Johne's disease (OJD): will show up from now on in 6-tooth and older sheep under stress.

Pulpy kidney (PK): Make sure sheep and 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.

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 toxemia: feed late pregnant ewes well, especially multiple-bearing ewes.

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 – the value of traceback

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has confirmed a case of classical scrapie in a sheep slaughtered in Oregon. This ended a five-year period with no detections and reset the 7-year timeline required for official scrapie-free recognition to about 2033.

USA national and state animal health officials have initiated an investigation to determine the flock of origin, but this has been made very difficult because the animal did not have a traceback ear tag.

Scrapie is a chronic disease of small ruminants that causes nervous signs and is always fatal once clinical signs are seen. Scrapie is typically contracted during the pregnancy and newborn lamb periods, which is why locating the flock of origin is so essential to any investigation. If traceback is effective, the flock of origin can be located, and the disease outbreak may be stopped in its tracks. Tracing to and from infected flocks would need to cover a number of years, showing how important it is to file copies of NVDs for at least 7 years.

Australia is currently recognised as free of scrapie. If scrapie was detected in Australia our sheep and goat meat export and domestic markets would be affected for an extended period.

Every year Australia tests approximately 200 brains from sheep with suggestive clinical signs as part of an assurance program to prove on-going national freedom and maintain access to our most important sheepmeat markets. Subsidies are available for the vet and the producer to help diagnose what is causing the signs - see [Bucks for brains](#) for details.

This USA case highlights the critical importance of our NLIS and NVD systems.

Bird Flu

Has now been detected in Tasmania. Lock your poultry up behind wire and protect them, their feed and water supplies from contact with wild birds.

See Biosecurity Tasmania's information here: [H5 Bird Flu](#).

Report any suspicious signs as soon as you notice them to the EAD Hotline on 1800 675 888 or to your veterinarian.



Diseases and conditions seen in July 2026

SHEEP				
Disease/condition	Number of reports/cases	Region	Details	Prevention, treatment, and other biosecurity advice or measures
Abortion	One maiden ewe in one small flock	Southern Tasmania	Ewes also had a lameness	Campylobacter, Toxo, Listeria, Salmonella are common causes, but Chlamydia, Erysipelas or stress possible causes in this case.
Acidosis	Eleven ewes in one large flock.	Southern Tasmania	Sudden access to unlimited potatoes	Potatoes contain a lot of carbohydrate and can be as toxic as grain. Sheep show a "porridge" scour, become depressed and may die. Early treatment with oral penicillin or virginiamycin under veterinary supervision can help. Move affected sheep from source of grain, feed roughage. Oral bicarb not recommended.
Arthritis infectious	Two recently shorn maiden ewes in one small flock	Southern Tasmania	Seen as lameness, and warm but not swollen joints. Responded to oxytetracycline	Uncommon age of onset, may have been Erysipelas picked up through shearing cuts or possibly Chlamydia.
Ascites (excess fluid in abdominal cavity)	Two aged ewes in one large flock	Southern Tasmania	May have been due to mesothelioma	Mesothelioma is a form of cancer of the lining of the abdominal cavity. No cure.
Body condition score low	A small number of sheep in a number of small, medium and large 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 e.g. footrot may also be involved. Fit to load: make sure low BCS sheep are strong enough for the planned journey.
Border disease/hairy shaker PI deaths	A significant number of PI lambs in one large flock	Southern Tasmania	After an outbreak of abortions, neonatal deaths, hairy lambs, some with nervous signs at marking last year, hairy lambs kept dying.	Hairy shakers are caused by infection of ewes during pregnancy with a Pestivirus, usually a different strain from the cattle strain. Large outbreaks have been recorded in Southern NSW, but this is the first large outbreak in Tasmania. There is no treatment for affected lambs, but they should be kept in contact with ewe lambs and ewes that will be mated the coming autumn to try and give them immunity before they become pregnant. The last of the visually obvious hairy Persistently Infected (PI) lambs has now died.

Broken mouth	One aged 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.
Cast	One ewe in one medium flock	Southern Tasmania	Maternal ewe in good condition.	Maternal ewes can get very fat, and if they get on their back cannot regain their feet, especially if they have a short neck. Often attacked by crows or bloat when down. Keep ewes at condition score 3.3 – 3.6. Check them frequently if they are overweight and getting cast. Is repeatable – identify them and cull after weaning.
Central incisors worn to gums	One full mouth ewe in one medium flock.	Southern Tasmania	May have been grazed on brassica bulbs on sandy soils as a two-tooth.	Now full mouth, so causing problems with nipping off grass and reducing pasture intake. Mouth and cull affected ewes after weaning
Coccidiosis in weaned lambs.	A number of flocks.	Northern Tasmania	Scouring with low worm egg count but high coccidia count.	Usually respond well to sulpha drugs under veterinary supervision. Prevention by good nutrition and don't allow lambs to concentrate on damp areas in paddock.
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.	May be due to worms, gut infection (e.g. Salmonella, Yersinia, coccidia), sudden change in diet. Have a <u>WORMTEST</u> egg count done and, for young sheep, 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 .
Dead foetuses at scanning	A significant number of ewe lambs in one large flock	Southern Tasmania	Scanner reports abnormalities in foetuses	Abortions can occur mid-pregnancy and not be noticed. Campylobacter, Listeria and Toxo most common in Tasmania, this flock had Border disease last year. Testing ongoing.
Death with swollen scrotum	One ram in one large flock	Southern Tasmania	Ram found dead with swollen scrotum	Possibly Clostridial disease. Vaccinate with 6 in 1.
Deaths of aged rams	Two rams in one large flock.	Southern Tasmania	Aged rams found dead	Possibly age related.
Deformed ear in ram	One case in one 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 (see vet)
Dermo (lumpy wool)	Small numbers of young Merino sheep in two medium and one large flock.	Northern and 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 the skin for example after heavy rain or jetting. See: <u>DPI - Lumpy wool fact sheet</u> .
Downer ram	One ram in one small flock	Southern Tasmania	Unknown cause, maybe fighting with another ram	This one was euthanased.
Ear tag infection	One lamb in one medium flock.	Northern Tasmania	Swelling, crusts, discharge around area	Clean and apply antiseptic spray. If ear is swollen may need antibiotics under veterinary supervision. Prevent by soaking tags in antiseptic before applying.

			where tag goes through ear	
Ear tag torn out	One lamb each from two large flocks.	Northern Tasmania	Torn ear	Remove projections in yards.
Euthanasia attempt	One ram in one small flock	Southern Tasmania	A number of attempts with a firearm	Only competent persons should attempt euthanasia.
Eye cancer	One sheep in one small flock.	Southern Tasmania.	Discharge down cheek, ulcerated and raw section of eyelid.	Older sheep with white eyelids. Cull as soon as noticed.
Fleece derangement	Several sheep from one small flock	Northern Tasmania	Wool staples hanging out from surface of fleece.	Usually body lice but can also be itch mite, grass seeds, shedding genetics etc.
Fleece rot	One sheep in one small flock.	Northern Tasmania	Greenish, blueish or pinkish discoloration of wool at skin level.	Caused by constantly wet fleece plus some genetic predisposition mainly in Merinos. Pre-disposes to body strike. Use flystrike preventative measures/chemicals during fly season and select against this trait.
Flystrike scar	One lamb in one small flock.	Northern Tasmania	Bare skin usually above tail or on body	Flystrike has damaged skin and wool has not grown back. For information on prevention, visit the FLYBOSS webpage: <u>Learn About Sheep Flystrike Control in Australia.</u>
Foot abscess (heel abscess)	Low incidence in a number of small, medium and large flocks.	NW, Northern and Southern Tasmania	Swelling of one toe, hot, painful and discharge pus in acute stage, this one in healing phase.	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 e.g. on slatted floor of shearing shed, epsom salts on drainage point and bandage. Ensure fit to load if transported.
Grain poisoning	A number of ewes in one medium flock	Southern Tas	Ewes knocked over a grain bin. Tucked up and lame (laminitis).	Treat: drench affected animals with penicillin, an oral rehydration product and plenty of water to combat dehydration. Inject broad spectrum antibiotic under veterinary supervision.
Growth rates low in lambs	One large flock	Northern Tasmania	Lambs in one mob growing slowly or losing weight despite good feed and low worm egg count.	Possible causes may be worms, fluke, dietary deficiency (energy, protein, micronutrients), liver damage/photosensitisation, recent scabby mouth, Mycoplasma ovis, chronic infections such as pneumonia, pleurisy etc. Conduct WORMTEST and FLUKETEST, review Feed On Offer.
Hamstrung	One lamb in one large flock.	Northern Tasmania	One hind leg sags down with the hock almost touching the ground.	Surgical repair theoretically possible but usually uneconomic so usually euthanased.
Head tilt	One sheep in in one medium flock	Northern Tasmania	Sheep holds its head around to one side.	May be due to neck injury or brain lesion. This one appeared to be coping well.
Hooves overgrown, deformed	A small number of sheep in three small flocks.	Northern Tasmania	Toe of hoof very long, can curl up. Soft ground, scald and footrot can be underlying causes.	Regular trimming. Control scald /footrot if present.

Hypocalcaemia ('milk fever')	A number of cases in heavily pregnant ewes in a number of medium and large flocks.	Northern and Southern Tasmania	Late pregnant ewes go down after period off feed or on cereal crops or lush pasture.	Treat with injection containing calcium (e.g. 4-in-1, Flo-Pak) 1/5 of a pack under skin. Warm pack in hot water before injection if possible and massage in well. Should get up within 30 minutes. If green rumen contents are coming out of nostrils give antibiotic cover under veterinary supervision. Prevent with mineral supplement if on cereal crops or lush pasture, don't keep off feed long if shearing, crutching or for pre-lamb treatments.
Kangaroo gait	Suspected in one large flock	Southern Tasmania	Seen in ewes up to 6 weeks after lambing, due to damage to nerves in front legs	Ewes move by hind leg action alone so look like a kangaroo hopping. Cause not known, will often recover if nursed.
Lameness	A small number of sheep in a small number of medium and small flocks.	NW, Northern and Southern 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.
Listeria	One ram in one large flock	Southern Tasmania	Sheep may have head tilt, walk in circles, die. Often associated with silage or brassica bulb feeding.	Remove from offending feed. Treat early with antibiotics under veterinary supervision but usually only successful in 50% of cases.
Low scanning rate in ewes in containment	About 15% lower than previously, mainly younger ewes in one large flock.	Southern Tasmania	Serology used to diagnose	<i>Campylobacter jejuni</i> suspected as the cause in this case.
Milk let-down failure	One ewe in one medium flock.	NW Tasmania	Lamb continually trying to get a feed.	A veterinarian can use an oxytocin injection to stimulate milk let-down.
Nasal discharge, purulent (snotty)	A number of lambs in a number of flocks	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.
Nematodirus	Medium egg counts in a large prime lamb flock	Northern 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.
Newborn lamb deaths	Excess deaths in one small flock.	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 postmortems can help identify causes and solutions. Keep ewe body condition score around 3, have sufficient pasture available (at least 800 kg DM/ha singles, 1200 kg DM/ha multiples) and shelter.

Ocular (eye) discharge both eyes	A number of sheep and lambs from a small number of large flocks.	Northern Tasmania	Could be first stage of pinkeye	Best to leave alone and keep checking, if possible, only yard if you have to.
Photosensitisation	Ears only in a small number of lambs in two large flocks. One ewe with affected face in one small flock.	Northern Tasmania	Skin peels off face and/or ears.	Blood sample for liver damage check, spore count pasture for Pithomyces (Facial Eczema) spores, check water for blue-green algae, poisonous plants and pigment plants (eg storksbill, medics). Treat with anti-inflammatories, antibiotics under veterinary supervision, if necessary, offer deep shade, move to new paddock.
Pneumonia	One ram in one medium flock.	Northern Tas	Respiratory distress and nasal discharge.	This one responded slowly to antibiotics under veterinary supervision.
Poll injuries, rams	One ram in one small flock.	Northern Tasmania	Fighting injuries	Normal behaviours. Use flystrike prevention if necessary.
Pregnancy rates low	A number of ewes in one large flock. One third of maidens in another.	Northern Tasmania	Scanned in lamb and number of foetuses slowly reducing over several years in the first flock, ram failure suspected in the second flock.	Ewes are vaccinated against Campylobacter but liver damage due to facial eczema suspected in first flock. Ram with shrivelled testes in the second.
Pregnancy Toxaemia (twin lamb disease)	One ewe in one large flock	Southern Tasmania	Caused by 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, 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'.
Scabby Mouth	Two lambs in one medium flock.	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
Scald	A number of ewes in one large flock	Southern Tasmania	Score 1 and 2 lesions (less than 2mm under-running of hoof horn at heel)	Also called benign footrot but can be due to Ovine Interdigital Dermatitis (OID) as well. Re-check in 14 days to ensure not progressing to virulent footrot. Usually responds to footbathing and dry conditions underfoot.
Scarring on topline	Two sheep in one medium flock	Northern Tasmania	Bare area of skin along top of spine	Can be due to sunburn in close shorn British breeds, photosensitisation or occasionally a reaction to topline pour-on chemicals. Make sure freshly shorn sheep have access to shade, especially if photosensitised, don't leave backline applicators out in hot sun as chemical can heat up in delivery lines and scald skin.

Shy feeders	A number of sheep in one large flock.	Southern Tasmania	Will not come to feed troughs in containment	Some will come onto feed if you draft them out and feed in a pen of shy feeders. Otherwise return to a paddock, sell, cull or feed hay or silage.
Soft, small testes	One ram in one large flock	Northern Tasmania	Testicles both soft and small in a mature ram. Rams should have large, full, springy testicles.	If because the ram is old, broken mouth, poor feet etc then cull the ram. Ram may have been ill and could recover full fertility. Offer rams high protein and energy feed for 8 weeks prior to joining aiming for BCS 3 to 3.5 at joining.
Toe abscess	A number of ewes in one medium flock	Southern Tasmania	Very lame but no swelling, heat or under-running. Small amount of grey pus in toe area.	Carefully pare back the toe, following any black track up front of toe until pus released. Usually no further treatment needed apart from antiseptic spray.
Toxoplasmosis	A number of young ewes in two large flocks	Northern and Southern Tasmania	Sampling of mobs with poor scanning results to see if Toxo was the cause.	A significant proportion of the young ewes were positive to blood test, but only at levels indicating infection some time ago. Toxo causes foetal and neonatal lamb losses if ewes are infected during pregnancy. For control strategies see: https://sheepconnecttasmania.files.wordpress.com/2013/04/sc-factsheet-no10-toxoplasmosis_lr.pdf
Tucked up	One ewe in containment in one large flock	Southern Tasmania	Probably due to subacute acidosis.	These ewes had been on grain for some months so may have been some other problem.
Wool break	One sheep in one medium flock	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 e.g. mastitis, whole mobs can have 'tender wool' after nutritional restriction or disease outbreak (e.g. heavy worm infestation) events.
Worms	A number of flocks.	NW, Northern and Southern Tasmania	A lot more high counts, many jumping from low/medium to high in 2 weeks. Moderate Nematodirus counts in some weaners. Black scour worm still dominant in larval cultures, brown stomach worm present.	Differentiate from nutritional scour or coccidia by <u>WORMTEST</u> 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 <u>WORMBOSS sheep worm control program</u> .
Yersinia enteritis	Weaners in a number of flocks	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.

CATTLE

B12 deficiency	One large herd	Northern Tasmania	Slow growth rates, anaemia, may be discharge from eyes.	Blood or liver test to diagnose. B12 injections are the usual treatment and last several months. Cobalt bullets or cobalt in fertiliser on pastures can be used to correct deficiency.
Barber's pole worm (BPW)	Detected in one large herd in routine egg	Northern Tasmania	Potentially anaemia, bottle jaw and sudden deaths.	Clinical signs of anaemia and bottle jaw are not usually seen in cattle in Tasmania. See <u>WORMBOSS</u> website for details on diagnosis, control and prevention programs.

	counts with larval ID.			
Chorioptic mange	A number of cattle in a number of small medium and large herds.	NW, Northern and Southern Tasmania	Hair loss around tail head and flanks. Rough scaly skin. Diagnosis by skin scraping.	More common as winter progresses. Can become severe if cattle are stressed and short on feed. A number of registered treatments are available including ML drenches and pour-ons. See <i>Different Species of Mites in Cattle</i> in LICEBOSS
Cooperia – resistant to mectin family drenches	One large herd.	Northern Tasmania	Scour, sub-optimal growth rates. Weaner cattle with high worm egg counts in manure samples 11 days after ML family treatment.	High % Cooperia detected using larval ID in lab. Resistance to the Ivermectin family of drenches has been seen in Tasmania, but oral BZ drenches usually still work. Try to create “clean” paddocks for weaner cattle. Monitor with WORMTEST every month. See WORMBOSS or more information.
Copper deficiency	One large herd	Northern Tasmania	Diagnose with liver or blood tests	Deficiencies may reduce immunity to worms and other disease, reduce growth rates, cause brittle bones that break easily, faded coat colour. Copper 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.
Corkscrew claw	Two cows in one medium herd	Northern Tasmania	Outside claw on hind foot grows up off ground in corkscrew form	Genetic cause. Cull.
Cryptorchid	A number of calves in a number of herds	Northern Tasmania	One or both testicles is/are not in the scrotum at marking.	A veterinarian may be able to remove the retained testicle/s surgically. Cryptorchidism is usually hereditary so if the sire and/or dam can be identified consider culling.
Dags	About a third of cattle in a number of herds.	Northern Tasmania	Dried faeces stuck on tail hair.	Previous scour. Worms, dietary factors and viral diseases can all be involved.
Downer cow	One cow in one large herd.	Southern Tasmania	Cow went down in late pregnancy – probably grass tetany, hypocalcaemia or pregnancy toxaemia.	Feed Causmag in hay or use magnesium boluses and feed well in late pregnancy if grass tetany/pregnancy toxaemia. Possibly pregnancy toxaemia if on poor feed, a urine test can help confirm. Ketosis treatments. Also possible are infections and poisonous plants. For management of downers see <i>Down Cows Resources</i> on Dairy Australia website.
Downer heifer	One heifer in one large herd	Southern Tasmania	Heifer had a rotten calf inside.	Removing dead calf, good nursing and antibiotics under veterinary supervision may allow recovery.
Drench resistance	A number of young cattle affected in one large herd.	Northern Tasmania	Macrocytic lactone (ML) resistance in Cooperia, Trichostrongylus and brown stomach worm.	Worm egg counts were zero after using an oral triple active drench.
Encephalitis and meningitis (brain infection)	One heifer in one large herd.	Northern Tasmania	Heifer was down with nervous signs.	Brain sections showed inflammation, but culture was unsuccessful so a bacterial cause could not be identified. Most likely cause would be <i>Haemophilus somni</i> .

Haematoma/abscess of penis	One bull in one large herd	Southern Tasmania	This one healed after treatment and is now serving cows.	Penile haematoma (broken penis) can be treated by a veterinarian, and some cases can return to service.
Lameness	A number of cows and bulls in a number of herds	Northern Tasmania	Foot abscess, sub-solar abscess, injuries etc	Remove cow from mob if possible, rest in small paddock or yard, give anti-biotics and anti-inflammatories, check for foot injuries and infections. May need paring/grinding of hooves and possibly glueing a block of wood under one claw.
Liver abscess, multiple	One cow in one large dairy herd	Northern Tasmania	May reflect low grade acidosis, rumen wall damage and bacteria leaking into blood stream.	This one diagnosed at postmortem. Cattle can wall off single abscesses, recover and continue to thrive. Prevention: care with feeding rich diets such as grain.
Newborn calf death	One calf in one large herd.	Southern Tasmania	Born normally but died soon after birth.	Abdominal cavity full of blood, possible liver capsule tear during difficult birth.
Ocular (eye) discharge (clear, watery)	A number of cattle from a number of small, medium and large 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.
Paraplegia	One cow in one medium herd.	Northern Tasmania	Standing on front legs but hind legs paralysed.	Could be spinal fracture due to weak bones possibly due to copper deficiency. Spinal abscess, spinal arthritis, injury also possible.
Pestivirus	A moderate proportion of heifers in a large beef cattle herd had strong reactions to the antibody test.	Northern Tasmania	Pestivirus can cause early resorption of foetus, abortions, stillbirths and permanently infected (PI) runt calves that grow poorly and usually die by 18 months of age	These deliberately exposed to a persistently infected (PI) animal. 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, visit the MLA webpage: <u>Pestivirus</u> Ask for the <u>Cattle Health Declaration</u> (recently updated) to ensure you know the health status of cattle (including bulls) before buying. For more information and to access health declarations for other species, visit: <u>Declarations on Farm Biosecurity</u> .
Pink Eye, winter	Severely affecting a number of cattle in two large herds.	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 in a small % of cases.	Winter pinkeye often caused by <i>Moraxella bovoculi</i> , different from summer pinkeye caused by <i>Moraxella bovis</i> . 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 pinkeye bacteria that occur in Tasmania, but does not cover <i>Moraxella bovoculi</i> , but customised vaccines can be made up. Visit the NSW DPI resource: <u>Pinkeye in Cattle</u> .
Pneumonia	Several weaner heifers in one large herd	Northern Tasmania	Heifers bought in from several sources. A few affected soon after introduction.	Early treatment under veterinary supervision with antibiotics and anti-inflammatories can resolve some cases. Vaccines are available that can help prevent.
Pregnancy rates low	50% in one mob in one large herd.	Southern Tasmania	Both first bull and backup bull had poor quality semen.	Bull testing prior to mating is worthwhile especially if you practice single sire mating.

Pregnancy rates low in first calvers	75% in a mob of first calvers in one large herd.	Northern Tasmania	Usually due to inadequate nutrition as maiden heifers rear their first calf and are still trying to grow out themselves.	Best to have your veterinarian investigate.
Premature calf death	One premature calf in two large herds.	Southern Tasmania	Can be due to Neospora, vibrio, Pestivirus, congenital abnormality	Lab work not carried out on this one. There are vaccines against vibrio and pestivirus.
Recumbency, sudden episodes	One premature calf in one large herd	Southern Tasmania	Calf appears normal then found lying on its side and not very responsive. Responds to warming up.	Small premature calves have difficulty regulating body temperature and can become hypothermic very quickly. Keep warm.
Red nose	One weaner in one large herd	Northern Tasmania	Reddened muzzle	Can be due to Infectious Bovine Rhinotracheitis or photosensitisation.
Retained afterbirth	One cow in one medium herd.	Southern Tasmania	Afterbirth still hanging out more than three days after giving birth.	If afterbirth cannot be easily removed manually, antibiotic treatment should be started under veterinary supervision and a weight such as a plastic bottle of water tied to the afterbirth to help it come out over the next few days.
Ringworm	A high proportion of young cattle in one large herd severely affected.	Southern Tasmania	Scaly circular areas of hair loss usually around head and neck but can be seen anywhere on body.	Usually heal up eventually if left alone. Antifungal ointments or iodine can be rubbed into lesions. Can infect people, so precautions must be taken.
Rubbing and damaging infrastructure	A number of growing cattle in one small herd	Northern Tasmania	Cattle rub on any object they can resulting in fences, gates, and other infrastructure being damaged.	Usually due to lice or chorioptic mange. Inspect closely for lice in hair coat and apply treatment as appropriate. Chorioptic mange mites cannot be seen with the naked eye but cause typical hair loss pattern.
Ruptured udder	One beef heifer in one large herd	Northern Tasmania	Mastitis infection bursting out through the side of the udder.	Surgical drainage, antibiotics and anti-inflammatories under veterinary care any salvage the heifer and remaining unaffected quarters.
Schistosomus reflexus foetus	One foetal calf in one large herd	Northern Tasmania	No abdominal wall and deformed body of calf preventing normal birth.	Schistosomus reflexus is a congenital deformity mostly seen in cattle but can be seen in sheep as well. Deformed calf usually cannot be delivered so vet may cut the calf up inside the cow using embryotomy wire or perform a caesarean.
Selenium deficiency	Several cows in one large herd	Northern Tasmania	History of low growth rates retained afterbirth and faded coats combined with low blood or liver levels.	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, retained afterbirth. Young cattle don't always grow faster under treatment even when blood selenium levels are low, so only treat if there is a production response.
Stillborn calves	Twin calves in one large herd	Southern Tasmania	Calves found dead.	May possible causes: diseases such as Campylobacter, Neospora, deficiencies of iodine, copper or selenium, or just a slow difficult birth.
Sub-fertile bulls	Two young bulls from	Southern Tasmania	Only 50 % of cows in calf, both	Pre-sale bull examination is worthwhile.

	one large stud.		first and backup bull had poor motility in semen.	
Sudden death	2 cows in two large herds.	Northern and Southern Tasmania	May be caused by grass tetany, Clostridial disease, plant poisoning.	Have postmortem carried out by vet.
Vagal indigestion	One heifer in one medium herd	Northern Tasmania	Heifer due to calve, left sided blown up, dehydrated, rumen not working.	Suspect vagal indigestion. Potential causes include 3 rd or 4 th stomach impaction, vagal nerve abscess. Veterinary treatments may be able to relieve symptoms.
Waterbelly calves (hydrops)	Two foetal calves in one large herd	Northern Tasmania	Cow's abdomen becomes very large in late pregnancy as fluid accumulates around foetus.	A veterinarian may be able to drain the fluid and deliver the calf, though calf usually does not survive.
Wire twitched around leg	One cow in one large herd	Northern Tasmania	Wire can be buried in leg or cut off circulation causing an amputation.	Wire deeply seated in foot close to and including bone in this case. Was removed, cow treated with antibiotics and anti-inflammatories. Prevention – clean up old fences, loose wire.
Wooden tongue	One cow in one herd	Southern Tasmania	Tongue sticking out a bit, not eating	Intravenous iodine given by vet usually best treatment. Antibiotic injections may work. Reduce access to spikey plants.
Worms	A number of young cattle in two large herds.	Northern Tasmania	High faecal egg counts, diarrhoea, some deaths. Cooperia dominating, but also Trichs, brown stomach worm and Barber's pole worm identified on larval culture.	Differentiate from nutritional scour or coccidia by <u>WORMTEST</u> . Use effective drench. Check that drench is working by repeating egg count 10-14 days later. Try to plan 'clean' paddocks for weaned calves. For more information, visit: <u>WORMBOSS Resources</u>
ALPACAS and CAMELS				
No cases reported				
GOATS				
No cases reported				
PIGS				
Arthritis (degenerative)	One aged boar on one property	Southern Tasmania	Lame, hard swollen joint, not hot to touch.	Euthanased.
POULTRY				
No cases reported				

DEER				
Manganese and iron damage to liver	A number of deer in one large herd	Southern Tasmania	Some deer died after diazepam sedation.	Manganese and iron can be high in bore water and creeks fed from springs in some areas and can interfere with breakdown of some veterinary drugs. Can be removed using simple methods. Manganese can be toxic to man as well. Test bore and creek water used for stock and drinking water.
WORKING DOGS				
Infected foot	One dog on one property	Northern Tasmania	Probably grass seed abscess, not responding to antibiotics	May need surgery to remove grass seed or other foreign body.
Inguinal hernia	One pup on one property	Southern Tasmania	Swelling in groin.	Could be repaired surgically.
Lip defect	One pup on one property	Northern Tasmania	A section of top lip missing due to bite by littermate.	Could be repaired surgically.
Metritis	One bitch on one property	Southern Tasmania	Whelped several weeks previously. Discharge and off food.	Responded well to antibiotics under veterinary supervision.
Mis-mating	Two bitches on two properties.	Southern Tasmania	Escaped confinement.	A veterinarian may be able to use veterinary drugs to terminate the unwanted pregnancy.
Overshot jaw	One pup on one property	Southern Tasmania	Bottom row of incisor teeth protrude past top row of incisor teeth.	Hereditary fault. Best not to repeat that pairing of dog and bitch.

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/multifaceted-agriculture/small-and-new-landholders/owning-livestock#TheNationalLivestockIdentificationSystem\(NLIS\)](https://nre.tas.gov.au/agriculture/multifaceted-agriculture/small-and-new-landholders/owning-livestock#TheNationalLivestockIdentificationSystem(NLIS))

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 Toxo and Sarco if fed to cats. See: <https://nre.tas.gov.au/biosecurity-tasmania/animal-biosecurity/animal-health/sheep/hydatid-disease>

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 provide evidence to 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 \$263 million worth of sheep meat and wool in 2023-24. 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. Visit [ParaBoss](#) for more information.

The ParaBoss website also includes an [online learning resource](#) providing practical knowledge of sheep worm control in Australia, including for the [Tasmania region](#).