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# STOCK HEALTH MONITOR

## Secure your farm and your future

If Australian producers are looking at ways to protect their profits from diseases, pests and weeds, their next step should be to visit [farmbiosecurity.com.au](http://farmbiosecurity.com.au) to view the latest videos that cover the important aspects of biosecurity training, planning and recording and managing feral animals and weeds.

Videos are one of the tools provided by the Farm Biosecurity Program, a joint Plant Health Australia (PHA) and Animal Health Australia (AHA) project, to generate awareness about good on-farm biosecurity practices.

The latest videos - *Train, Plan, Record and Feral Animals and Weeds* - focus on the importance of biosecurity training for staff and family members, creating a customised biosecurity plan, the critical role of record keeping and managing feral animals and weeds. All of these actions are simple, yet vital, steps to minimise the biosecurity risks to your farm.

Duncan Rowland, AHA's Executive Manager Biosecurity Services, said the videos include practical advice, tips and interviews with real-life farmers, demonstrating the biosecurity measures they implement on their properties.

"Many producers are concerned about crop and livestock destruction caused by feral and wild animals, but many do not realise the biosecurity risks they bring as carriers of diseases, pests and weed seeds. These videos show the mitigation measures to address those risks when managing these unwanted intruders," Mr Rowland said.

Alison Saunders, PHA's National Manager for Horticulture, said that many producers spend a lot of time and money controlling weeds on their properties.

"It's important to not just control weeds in a paddock, but also the areas surrounding crops and along fence lines and property boundaries. This is because weeds and volunteer plants next to a crop can act as a haven for pests and diseases between seasons and a source of infection for the next season's crop," Ms Saunders said.

"To be effective, biosecurity should be part of day-to-day activities. The growing suite of Farm Biosecurity videos has something for anyone looking to improve aspects of biosecurity on their farms. That's what the Farm Biosecurity Program is all about: providing up-to-date, relevant information for all Australian producers," Ms Saunders said. ■

Earlier videos in the series covered the biosecurity risks associated with people, vehicles and equipment and moving anything onto or off your property. To view all the videos in the series go to [farmbiosecurity.com.au/videos](http://farmbiosecurity.com.au/videos).



The latest Farm Biosecurity videos look at training, biosecurity planning, monitoring and recording and managing feral animals and weeds

**Stock Health Monitor (SHM) provides Australia's alpaca, cattle, goat and sheep producer communities with the latest information on avoiding, managing and controlling livestock production conditions, implementing best practice on-farm biosecurity measures and updates on the latest research and development. It is a partnership initiative between AHA and livestock industries in recognition that livestock production conditions impact the red meat value chain and Australia's market access certification requirements.**

**SHM is published twice a year, in spring and autumn. Contributions are encouraged. If you have a piece you would like considered for SHM, please email [shm@animalhealthaustralia.com.au](mailto:shm@animalhealthaustralia.com.au)**

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## The persistent problem of Pestivirus

**The Livestock Biosecurity Network (LBN) has some helpful advice for cattle producers looking to avoid and control Pestivirus in cattle.**

Pestivirus is one of the most prevalent diseases in the South Australian cattle herd, but it can be easily diagnosed and the risk of introduction into the herd can be reduced using some simple biosecurity steps.

There is no 'one size fits all' approach for managing Pestivirus but given up to 90 per cent of Australian herds have the virus or have had it in the past, just about every herd would benefit from a systematic strategy to manage it.

Pestivirus (also known as BVD, BVDV or mucosal disease) is primarily a reproductive disease but also affects the immune system, leaving animals more susceptible to other diseases for the rest of their lives. It can be insidious and often goes undetected due to its subtle clinical signs like poor reproductive performance, ill thrift, and poor doers.

The costs of the disease are estimated at between \$15-100 per breeder per year.

In pasture based grazing systems, Pestivirus causes a mild transient infection from which cattle recover.

However, if females are infected during pregnancy, BVD can cause abortion, still birth, birth deformities or calves that remain persistently infected for their entire life.

These persistently infected (PI) animals are the main source of infection to the rest of your herd. They are virus factories that excrete huge amounts of virus for their whole life, and are a constant source of infection to other cattle. PIs are often, but not always, sickly animals that tend to die before two years of age.

On a positive note, Pestivirus can be managed to reduce its impact on your breeding herd, and some simple steps can reduce the risk of the virus from entering your herd in the first place.

A good place to start is to find out the status of your herd or breeders. Talk to your vet about testing the immune status of your most vulnerable females, heifers, well before joining so you can make some decisions about how to manage them during pregnancy. You only need to blood test 10 per cent (minimum six animals) from each group as long as all animals have been running together for more than two months and are at least eight months old.

Control methods for Pestivirus include identifying and removing PIs, and using vaccine. In some circumstances your veterinarian may consider using PIs to 'auto-vaccinate' heifers prior to mating or doing nothing. Since neither of these methods gives an absolute coverage it is important to understand the risk to your business with both these options.

The cost benefit of introducing a control program will vary depending on your enterprise. Your vet can help you tailor a program to suit your enterprise.

To prevent introduction of the virus to your herd, use some basic biosecurity practices.

Use a cattle health statement when buying cattle to confirm the absence of a PI status. If buying untested stock prevent introduction of persistently infected animals, including bulls, by identifying them with a simple and inexpensive ear mark or hair test before they are introduced to the property (again, speak to your vet about how you can do this), and isolate new stock for at least 28 days before introducing to your resident herd.

This should be sufficient time for animals to develop any early symptoms associated with pestivirus infection. Prevent cattle in quarantine from having nose to nose contact with your cattle, and also avoid contact between your herd and neighbouring cattle.

It's a good idea to keep records and monitor herd health to detect subtle changes (fever, transient diarrhoea and cough) that might indicate that Pestivirus has entered your herd. Investigate poor reproduction performance, ill thrift or increased incidence of other diseases (such as scours or respiratory disease) which may be signs of Pestivirus. If groups are managed separately then some groups may be affected and some not.

The more productive your enterprise, the bigger the impact Pestivirus will have. So, talk to your vet and get some advice on the best approach to managing the risk of Pestivirus in your herd! ■



**For more information about Pestivirus and avoiding, managing and eradicating other endemic diseases of sheep and cattle, visit the LBN website – [www.lbn.org.au](http://www.lbn.org.au)**

# Practical biosecurity for sheep producers

By Dr Pat Kluver, Victorian LBN Regional Officer

**By far the greatest risk for disease introduction on-farm is the purchase of livestock. Buying sheep brings risks of introducing a number of conditions that can cause ongoing production losses and incur significant eradication costs.**

A good biosecurity strategy will go a long way towards minimising the disease risk from purchased sheep. It doesn't have to be expensive or elaborate, and is best thought of in three components: prepurchase, farmgate, and on-farm.

## Pre-purchase checks

Pre-farmgate biosecurity is all about the background and physical checks you do before you decide to buy. The Sheep Health Statement (SHS) contains most of the history you need for an initial risk assessment, so ask for it from the vendor, read it and understand it. If the sheep don't come with an SHS, don't buy them.

Try to buy from reputable vendors, and limit the number of lots you buy, because the more sources you buy from, the greater the risk. If you bought from the same vendor last year and were happy with the sheep, buy from the same producer again; better still, buy direct.

Get in the pen and check the sheep for footrot and lice. Pick out 20 sheep, targeting any that look uncoordinated, lame or have pulled wool, then perform 20 fleece partings per sheep to look for lice. Check the feet of the lame ones; if you find any evidence of footrot damage, don't buy them.

When buying rams, make sure they come from brucellosis-free accredited flocks. Never buy rams from the saleyards, and still do your own checks as a matter of habit.

## Farmgate biosecurity

When you get the newly purchased sheep home, you need to do a few things as they come off the truck. For producers in high rainfall areas of South East Australia, a footbath in zinc sulphate should remove any footrot bacteria acquired in the saleyards or on the truck. However, if the sheep already have footrot, this footbath is unlikely to eradicate it.

The sheep will also need a quarantine drench to remove multiple-resistant worms. This must contain a mixture of four different active ingredients, including one of the new drenches. Options are:

- Zolvix® (monepantel) and a triple drench—abamectin or moxidectin with levamisole (clear) and benzimidazole (white)
- Startect® (derquantel and abamectin) and a combination drench—levamisole (clear) and benzimidazole (white).

If the sheep come from fluke country, a flukicide should also be given. After the drench, keep the sheep in the yards for 48–72 hours to allow them to empty out any worm eggs; then check their parasite burden with a faecal egg count 10–14 days later to make sure the drench has worked.

You can treat new sheep for lice by dipping them, but only if the sheep are less than 4–6 weeks off shears. If they have more than six weeks wool or if you want to use a backliner, you'll have to shear them first, which might be difficult to justify economically when the sheep are in short wool.

## On-farm

Even when you have done all your checks and induction treatments, new sheep still pose a disease risk, so you must keep them isolated from other sheep until you are sure they don't have footrot or lice. For footrot, you need to keep them isolated until after a good period of warm, wet weather, which is usually at the end of normal spring. To be sure the sheep don't have lice, keep them separate for at least six months or to be really sure, until after the next shearing.

Sheep in quarantine can be moved through yards and can be drenched. The golden rule is that other sheep can't cross their path for seven days. So if you have to yard the sheep in quarantine, do them last, followed by spelling the laneways and yards for seven days. If you need to move them, other sheep can safely enter the old quarantine paddock after seven days.

Rams joined to a recently purchased, quarantined flock are then also under quarantine—they should be kept separate from your other flock rams until the quarantine period is over, and they are confirmed free from lice and footrot. Alternatively, consider using the cull rams to mate with your recently purchased ewes.

At the end of the quarantine period, conduct another inspection to ensure that the sheep are free from the condition in question by parting the fleece of 20 sheep and examining the feet of any lame sheep.

The beauty of on-farm quarantine is that, if you have inadvertently brought footrot or lice onto the farm, you will limit the condition to a small proportion of your flock; as a result, it will be much cheaper and easier to deal with. Minimising the disease risk with introduced sheep requires a little effort and some planning, but costs very little and provides immediate, ongoing and cumulative returns.

## Biosecurity checklist when purchasing sheep (lambs, ewes, wethers or rams).

### Pre-purchase

- ✓ Examine Sheep Health Statement
- ✓ Undertake background checks
- ✓ Examine sheep for footrot and lice, and rams for brucellosis.

### Farmgate treatments

- ✓ Quarantine drench (4-way drench)
- ✓ Footbath with 10% zinc sulphate (For producers in high rainfall areas of South East Australia)

### On-farm quarantine paddock

- ✓ Undertake worm egg count after 10–14 days
- ✓ Quarantine for footrot until the end of spread period (spring)
- ✓ Quarantine for lice for at least six months or until the next shearing

For more information and to access a host of free and useful resources to implement good on-farm biosecurity for sheep visit [farmbiosecurity.com.au](http://farmbiosecurity.com.au)

## A message for stock feed manufacturers

A letter was recently sent to Australian stock feed manufacturers to highlight the importance of the ruminant feed ban and the part they play.

The message is that we need to maintain strong due diligence in maintaining the required controls under the ruminant feed ban.

The Stock Feed Manufacturers' Council of Australia (SFMCA) is a partner in the Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathy Freedom Assurance Program (TSEFAP) and has been intimately involved in the ruminant feed ban regulations and their implementation in each State and Territory.

### The current ruminant feed ban controls have been in place for over 10 years and have a twofold aim:

1. To protect Australia from the spread of Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) or any other Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathy (TSE) should we ever have a positive case.
2. Demonstrate controls are in place to meet the overseas market requirements of our trade partners in the export of meat and dairy products.

### Stock feed manufacturers should to do the following:

- a. Review their company's existing ruminant feed ban controls.
- b. Ensure they meet all regulated requirements.
- c. Ensure they respond to jurisdictional inspections and rectify any non-conformances identified.
- d. Implement on-going training in the ruminant feed ban. This needs to be at greater frequency for multi-species feed mills.

*TSEFAP is a national program managed by AHA. TSEFAP's purpose is to enhance market confidence that Australian animals and animal products are free from TSEs through the structured and nationally integrated management of animal-related TSE activities.*

In addition to feed mill audits, under TSEFAP, audits are completed where farmers mix their own feeds targeting multispecies operations, feed retailers, renderers and beef feedlots. Greater emphasis has been placed on feed repacking by retailers where the restricted animal material (RAM) labelling is required. We ask feed mills supplying retailers to re-inforce the message that both the RAM positive and negative labelling statements are required on all stockfeed, no matter what pack size and where repacked into smaller bags.

The document Verifying Cross Transference Controls should be used by mills as they review their ruminant feed ban controls. ■

More information about the TSEFAP can be found at <http://bit.ly/1jMVcf3>

You are also able to access supporting information from the SFMCA FeedSafe website page <http://bit.ly/1NJSgHL>



## Tips for purchasing goats from interstate

*SHM's regular contributor, Dr Berwyn Squire, Goat Health Veterinary Officer, Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources, has some helpful hints to consider when buying goats from another state.*

Depending on which state/territory you are introducing goats into, the goats may require a particular assurance rating on the National Goat Health Statement.

The table below provides some guidance, but you should always confirm with the importing state, prior to moving the livestock, that the information is correct, as rules can change.

Goats with an assurance rating of less than four may be introduced into some states with prior approval – please check the relevant state agriculture department website.

**Table 1. The minimum Assurance Rating required for each state and territory for entry of goats from interstate.**

ND = Non-dairy, D or RF = Dairy of Risk Factors, CT = Check Test, BPA = Beef Protected Area, PZ = Protected Zone, MN = Monitored Negative							
State	To ACT/ NSW	To NT	To QLD	To SA	To TAS	To VIC	To WA
From ACT/NSW	4	ND 5 D or RF 6	ND 5 D or RF 6	For PZ 6 For BPA 5	Mainland 4 Flinders Island ND 5 D or RF 6	4	ND MN2, MN3, 7 or 8 (incl CT) D MN3 or 8
From NT	4	4	ND 5 D or RF 6	For PZ 6 For BPA 5	4	4	ND MN2, MN3, 7 or 8 D MN2, MN3, 7 or 8 (incl CT)
From QLD	4	4	4	For PZ 6 For BPA 5	4	4	ND MN2, MN3, 7 or 8 D MN2, MN3, 7 or 8 (incl CT)
From SA	4	4 / For BPA ND 5 D or RF 6	ND 5 D or RF 6	4	Mainland 4 Flinders Island – 4 or from BPA ND 5 D or RF 6	4	ND MN2, MN3, 7 or 8 D MN2, MN3, 7 or 8 (incl CT) / FOR BPA ND MN2, MN3, 7 or 8 (incl CT) D MN3 or 8
From TAS	MAP or CT	ND 7 D or RF 8	ND 5 D or RF 6	For PZ 6 For BPA 5	4	Mainland – MAP or CT, Flinders Island - 4	Mainland – MN3 or 8, Flinders Island ND MN2, MN3, 7 or 8 D MN2, MN3, 7 or 8 (including CT)
From VIC	4	ND 7 D or RF 8	ND 5 D or RF 6	For PZ 6 For BPA 5	Mainland 4 Flinders Island ND 7 D or RF 8	4	MN3 or 8
From WA	4	4	ND 5 D or RF 6	For PZ 6 For BPA 5	4	4	4

A correctly completed National Vendor Declaration (NVD) is legally required to be provided by the seller and retained by the purchaser for seven years. If you would like to know more about NVDs visit the Meat & Livestock Australia website ([mla.com.au](http://mla.com.au)) and search for NVDs.

Some states also have the requirement for specific interstate movement paperwork / health certificates and disease testing.

Below are contact details for each state and information about their respective movement requirements:

<b>New South Wales</b>	1800 808 095	<a href="http://bit.ly/21wPv79">http://bit.ly/21wPv79</a>
<b>Northern Territory</b>	08 8999 5511	<a href="http://bit.ly/1YJrDLd">http://bit.ly/1YJrDLd</a>
<b>Queensland</b>	132 523	<a href="http://bit.ly/1SyadgG">http://bit.ly/1SyadgG</a>
<b>South Australia</b>	08 8207 7900	<a href="http://bit.ly/1O5mVjm">http://bit.ly/1O5mVjm</a>
<b>Tasmania</b>	1300 368 550	<a href="http://bit.ly/1OHpT08">http://bit.ly/1OHpT08</a>
<b>Victoria</b>	136 186	<a href="http://bit.ly/1N4IvEO">http://bit.ly/1N4IvEO</a>
<b>Western Australia</b>	08 9334 1800	<a href="http://bit.ly/1NqoaZL">http://bit.ly/1NqoaZL</a>

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Other important things to consider:

- To have goats (or any other livestock) on your land you are required to obtain a Property Identification Code (PIC) from your state agriculture department. In some states it is free, in some states there is a charge – but there is a fine if you don't have one.
- The goats may be required to be National Livestock Identification System (NLIS) tagged. Some states have exemptions for dairy breeds unless dairy goats are sold through a saleyard or are assigned to an abattoir where they must be ear-tagged.
- Depending on which state you are in, you will also need to record the goat movement on the NLIS database. ■

### Berwyn's analogies for goat producers to remember

- A PIC is like a driver's licence.
- NLIS tags are like the number plates on your car.
- The NVD is the car registration papers.
- A National Goat Health Statement is the mechanic's report – so don't buy a lemon.

Want to know more about livestock movements?

Go to <http://bit.ly/1TzDulg>

Information contained in this article was correct at the time of publication. Remember to check with your local departmental officer before you transfer animals interstate.

## Have you got the right tools for the New Year?

**Starting off the New Year with a big to-do list for the property? Then, why not integrate some key biosecurity actions at the same time, with the help of the Farm Biosecurity Toolkit.**

One of the significant features on the Farm Biosecurity website is the option for producers to create a tailored, online toolkit to assist them with implementing the right biosecurity actions to protect their property.

**To use this simple feature, go to the profiler page at <http://bit.ly/1O5pFgE> on Farm Biosecurity website, and select the livestock and crops that are specific to your farm. The profiler will search and collect all the relevant resources from the Farm Biosecurity website to create a tailored toolkit.**

For example, if you are a duck producer and grape grower, the profiler creates a list of resources relevant to those two industries, including the National Farm Biosecurity Manual for Poultry, the National Farm Biosecurity Technical Manual for Egg Production, the Nursery Provider Checklist and the Biosecurity Manual for the Viticulture Industry, saving you time by not having to sift through the entire website.

### The Toolkit is mobile too!

AHA's Executive Manager, Biosecurity, Duncan Rowland, said the Toolkit function on the website is now even handier with the mobile compatibility of the website.

*"For producers with smartphones, getting the most relevant information is now easier and quicker, with the recently-refurbished mobile-compatible website which incorporates the toolkit function," Mr Rowland said.*

*"If you're out and about and have internet access, just log on to the website from your phone and go to the Toolkit, the same way you would on a normal computer. As long as you have a connection to the internet, all the biosecurity information you need is at your fingertips. This is just another way we continue to enhance the innovative approach of the Farm Biosecurity Program," Mr Rowland said. ■*

### Create your farm profile and toolkit of resources

Select the livestock and crops that are specific to your farm. This feature will collect website to create your toolkit.

#### Select your industry (select all that apply)

##### Livestock

Alpacas

Chickens

Ducks

Goats

Lot feeding

Sheep

Beef cattle

Dairy cattle

Eggs

Horses

Pigs

Zoos

##### Crops

Cotton

Fruit & nuts

Grains

Honey bees

Nursery & garden

Plantation forestry

Vegetables

Viticulture

The Farm Biosecurity profiler lets users select their chosen industries to find the most relevant biosecurity resources with just the click of a button

## Goat producers: get the facts on CAE

Goat production is a fast growing and, in many cases, a highly lucrative industry within the Australian livestock sector. But without adequate endemic disease prevention, control and, where feasible, eradication, this thriving industry could be jeopardised.

One disease in particular, caprine arthritis encephalitis (CAE), having no cure or treatment, is on the rise. This is why the Goat Industry Council of Australia (GICA) and AHA have teamed up to create a handy fact sheet with up-to-date information about avoiding the disease.

AHA's Manager, Endemic Diseases, Dr Lorna Citer, said the disease needs to be taken seriously and the more information provided to goat producers the better.

*"CAE is a significant disease because it causes a loss in production, affects the wellbeing of goats and can lead to a slow painful death. And, the disease can affect everyone, from large commercial enterprises to smaller land holders and lifestyle farmers with just one or two animals," Dr Citer said.*

*"Not only is there no cure, but there is also no vaccine currently available. The only way to fight this disease is to stop it at the farm gate," Dr Citer said.*

*"To assist producers to better understand CAE, the fact sheet was prepared based on the latest research. Every goat producer should download a copy today," Dr Citer said.*

Dr Citer said that Australia is a little behind the game when compared to other advanced goat-producing countries and with our goat exports on the rise, more attention is being paid to our national disease status.

*"Avoiding the spread of the disease domestically has an important benefit for our growing export market as some of Australia's international trading partners require certification of disease freedom.*

*"Several countries, including New Zealand are already implementing CAE control or eradication programs and Norway and Switzerland have eradicated the disease altogether," Dr Citer added.*

*"A simple way of avoiding CAE is to practice good personal hygiene and basic on-farm biosecurity, like washing your hands after handling goats, and changing clothes and washing footwear between visits to different properties," Dr Citer said.*

GICA's dairy goat representative, John Falkenhagen, said GICA was proud to be playing the important role of disseminating critical animal health information to Australia's goat producer community.

*"GICA recognises the importance of controlling this disease and encourages every goat owner, no matter how big or small their herd is, to implement sound animal health and biosecurity practices," Mr Falkenhagen said.*

*"GICA has decided to undertake a carefully planned three-year approach to develop a number of tools that will assist producers manage the risk of CAE in their goats.*

*"We will be in regular contact with goat producers, continuing to spread the message about best practice ways to improve production in milk, meat and fibre goats," Mr Falkenhagen said.*

For more information about controlling CAE please contact your veterinarian or state department animal health officer.

Go to <http://bit.ly/1MXxuy> to download the CAE fact sheet and to see regular biosecurity and goat health updates.

*The new CAE fact sheet will help goat producers better understand this growing disease*



## New name and sharper focus

The Sheep Health Project, formerly known as the sheep pilot Livestock Production Conditions Project, is now past the pilot phase as work begins on enhancing the project over the next three years.

AHA is now working with the sheep industry peak bodies, the LBN, the Australian Veterinary Association (AVA) and the state governments to enhance the project, which takes a proactive approach to tackling sheep production issues, with a greater emphasis on biosecurity and associated communication and extension activities.

After a successful first year under a steering committee made up of representatives from the sheep industries, associated industries, state governments, the LBN and AVA, the project was reviewed.

A strategic workshop was recently held with the steering committee focusing on recommendations from the review. Members have decided on a name change, to the 'Sheep Health Project'.

AHA is working with the steering committee to develop and implement a new three year business plan.

For more information about the project email AHA's Biosecurity Coordinator Rob Barwell at [rbarwell@animalhealthaustralia.com.au](mailto:rbarwell@animalhealthaustralia.com.au)

### Sheep Health Project vision statement

*'Continuous improvement in industry management of sheep health and biosecurity that sustains efficient production and ongoing market access'*

## Hot wet weather is a hot time for sheep diseases

Hot weather can often be a difficult time on the property with the obvious fear of drought and dry conditions threatening production and turnover, but biosecurity threats shouldn't be overlooked either. Two examples of sheep conditions in hot weather that can be managed with good biosecurity practices are fly strike and Barber's pole worm.

### Fly strike

Fly strike is a significant health and welfare risk to Australian sheep and costs \$280 million annually (WA Department of Agriculture and Food). Flystrike should be actively monitored and managed to reduce losses in production and maintain good animal welfare.

Fly strike occurs when the correct species of fly is present on your property together with warm, wet and low wind conditions in the region.

Fly strike prevention is much better than the cure. Short term management tools include careful and considered chemical application, crutching and shearing, and controlling worms and dags. A longer term solution is to consider breeding sheep with less wrinkles and dag production.

For more information, go to <http://bit.ly/1Q1TC7m> to view the WA Department of Agriculture and Food's excellent webpage on fly strike.



Australian Sheep Blowfly Western Australian Brown Blowfly Lesser Brown Blowfly

© Agriculture Western Australia

### Barber's pole worm

Barber's pole worm is another biosecurity risk for sheep that occurs more often during the warmer, wetter periods of the year.

Drenching is an important biosecurity action to prevent Barber's pole worm. However, with increasing resistance to existing drench types, this parasite is getting harder to control and prevent.

Non-chemical prevention is recommended and producers should consider adopting grazing strategies that assist in preventing sheep from picking up the parasite.

Grazing management strategies to consider include:

- Avoid paddocks heavily contaminated with worm larvae.
- Reduce contamination of paddocks with worm eggs and allow time for most of the eggs and larvae on the pasture to die. (Go to <http://bit.ly/1MXtmHA> to visit the Wormboss grazing management online learning portal for more information.)
- Alternate grazing by cattle and sheep.

Importantly, producers should be requesting a National Sheep Health Statement when they are purchasing new animals to determine whether regular faecal egg counts and drench resistance testing has occurred on the vendor's property.

Equally, if producers are selling livestock, selling them with a health statement gives your customers confidence in the stock you are selling.

Visit <http://bit.ly/1TxFnWz> to download a National Sheep Health Statement from the Farm Biosecurity website.

### A plan is always the best approach

The best way to keep on top of any production condition this summer is to ensure you have a robust biosecurity plan that is woven into your daily work schedule and ensure that anyone that has come to help out with the workload during this busy period is across your biosecurity action list. ■

Producers are encouraged to download the Farm Biosecurity Action Planner by going to <http://bit.ly/1XAzPjD>. The Planner will help you to organise and structure your summer biosecurity actions.



## Catch up with the Livestock Biosecurity Network

Sometimes the best advice, the best information and the most convenient way to get the facts comes from speaking with an expert in person. Thankfully, when it comes to animal biosecurity information the LBN has this covered.

The LBN is an independent industry initiative established by the Cattle Council of Australia, Sheepmeat Council of Australia and Wool Producers Australia. The initiative is being funded over a three-year pilot period by industry levies held in trust.

The LBN has regional officers on the ground in all states and territories, providing livestock producers with the necessary tools and useful information needed to avoid, control and eradicate diseases, pests and weeds on their property.

The LBN regional officers are out and about every day, hosting and attending workshops and events that all producers can benefit from and are encouraged to attend.

To find out when an LBN regional officer will be in your area, view the calendar on the LBN website ([www.lbn.org.au](http://www.lbn.org.au)) or contact your local LBN officer:

### Northern Australia:

Sarah-Jane Wilson – M: 0437 725 877, E: [sjwilson@lbn.org.au](mailto:sjwilson@lbn.org.au)

### Southern Qld & Northern NSW:

Corrie Grimmett – M: 0403 863 413, E: [cgrimmnett@lbn.org.au](mailto:cgrimmnett@lbn.org.au)

### Southern NSW:

Rachel Gordon – M: 0488 400 207, E: [rgordon@lbn.org.au](mailto:rgordon@lbn.org.au)

### Victoria:

Patrick Kluver – M: 0499 077 213, E: [pkluver@lbn.org.au](mailto:pkluver@lbn.org.au)

### Tasmania:

Jess Coad – M: 0488 400 209, E: [jcoad@lbn.org.au](mailto:jcoad@lbn.org.au)

### Western Australia:

Carey Hobson – M: 0488 100 426, E: [chobson@lbn.org.au](mailto:chobson@lbn.org.au) ■



*LBN regional officer, Rachel Gordon is the LBN's latest recruit and covers the southern NSW region*

## Three million sheep go under the microscope

This year, over three million sheep were inspected for a range of diseases and health conditions at abattoirs across the country as part of the National Sheep Health Monitoring Project (NSHMP), which is coordinated by AHA.

Importantly, this program continues to provide vital information for participating producers about the health status of their flocks.

The project records the following 15 diseases and conditions:

- Liver Fluke
- Hydatids
- Ovis
- Cheesy gland
- Pleurisy
- Sarcocystis
- Knotty gut
- Sheep measles
- Grass seeds
- Arthritis
- Dog bites
- Pneumonia
- Ovine Johne's disease
- Vaccination lesions
- Bladder worm

The recording and uploading of this information is now done electronically which has improved the accuracy of the process by reducing transcription errors. This electronic record also increases the opportunity for the data to be analysed for trends and anomalies in dispositions in any particular abattoir.

The opportunities for improving animal health, yields and meat quality are only now becoming apparent and desirable when seen in the context of branded product and corporate customers with supply chain requirements.

Producer feedback workshops, conducted in conjunction with Manildra Meats of Cootamundra and MC Herds of Geelong, were used as a proof of concept. Both workshops demonstrated that there was a real hunger by sheep meat producers for not only information on sheep health data, but also to gain an understanding of the threats to sheep health in their region and how to mitigate these threats to flock health and meat quality.

The challenge for the project now is to increase the cost efficiency of collecting this sheep health data and to maximise its benefit to both processors and producers. This will require reviewing how data is collected, what is collected and how it can best be utilised.

MINTRAC, which manages the data collection on behalf of AHA, has had some changes in personnel in the last two months with James Corcoran leaving MINTRAC and Fiona Gojan and Mark Beecham joining our NSHMP team. Fiona has an extensive background in data entry and management systems while Mark has had a long career in the meat industry, both here and overseas. The pair bring a contemporary approach to the management and utilisation of data and will build on James' excellent work in the past two years. ■

For more information about the NSHMP, go to <http://bit.ly/1Oz06cp>.



*An example of chronic liver fluke found during routine NSHMP surveillance*

## Number of known infected herds and flocks, December 2015

### CATTLE

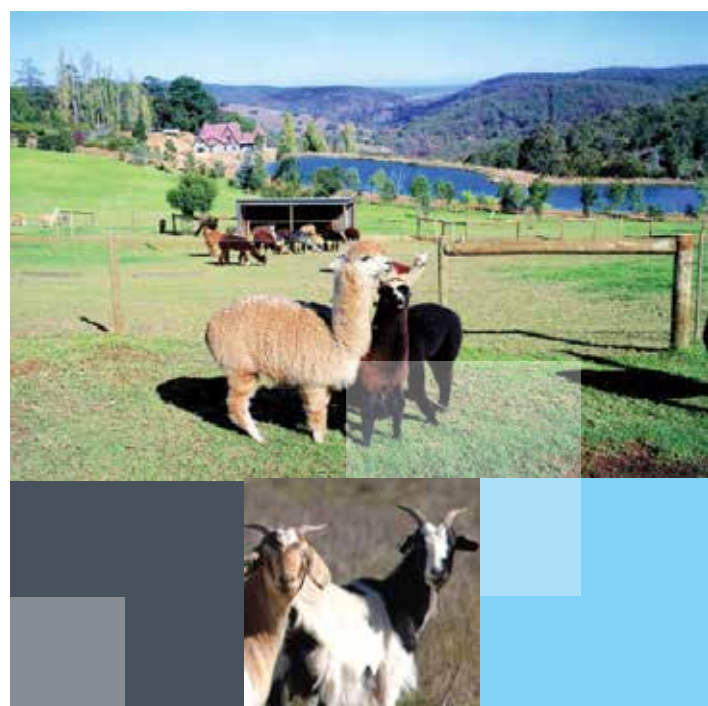
#### Number of known infected cattle herds

State	Sept 2014	Dec 2014	Mar 2015	June 2015
NSW	124	124	124	124
QLD	5	4	4	4
SA	52	52	56	56
TAS	39	39	39	39
VIC	919	918	918	918
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1139</b>	<b>1137</b>	<b>1141</b>	<b>1141</b>

### GOAT

#### Number of known infected goat herds

State	Sept 2014	Dec 2014	Mar 2015	June 2015
NSW	3	3	3	3
QLD	1	0	0	0
SA	1	1	2	2
TAS	4	4	4	4
VIC	10	10	10	10
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>19</b>



## Number of assessed herds and flocks in MAPS, December 2015

ALPACA	MN1	MN2	MN3	TOTAL
NSW	0	3	7	10
QLD	0	0	0	0
SA	0	3	4	7
TAS	0	0	0	0
VIC	0	0	2	2
WA	0	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>19</b>

CATTLE	MN1	MN2	MN3	TOTAL
NSW	37	46	64	147
QLD	0	0	0	0
SA	17	40	58	115
TAS	5	13	17	35
VIC	15	27	22	64
WA	0	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>361</b>

GOAT	MN1	MN2	MN3	TOTAL
NSW	4	6	1	11
QLD	0	2	0	2
SA	1	3	4	8
TAS	1	0	0	1
VIC	1	0	0	1
WA	0	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>23</b>

SHEEP	MN1	MN2	MN3	TOTAL
NSW	17	35	102	154
QLD	0	0	0	0
SA	15	25	113	153
TAS	1	2	10	13
VIC	10	10	32	52
WA	2	2	0	4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>257</b>	<b>376</b>

## Contacts

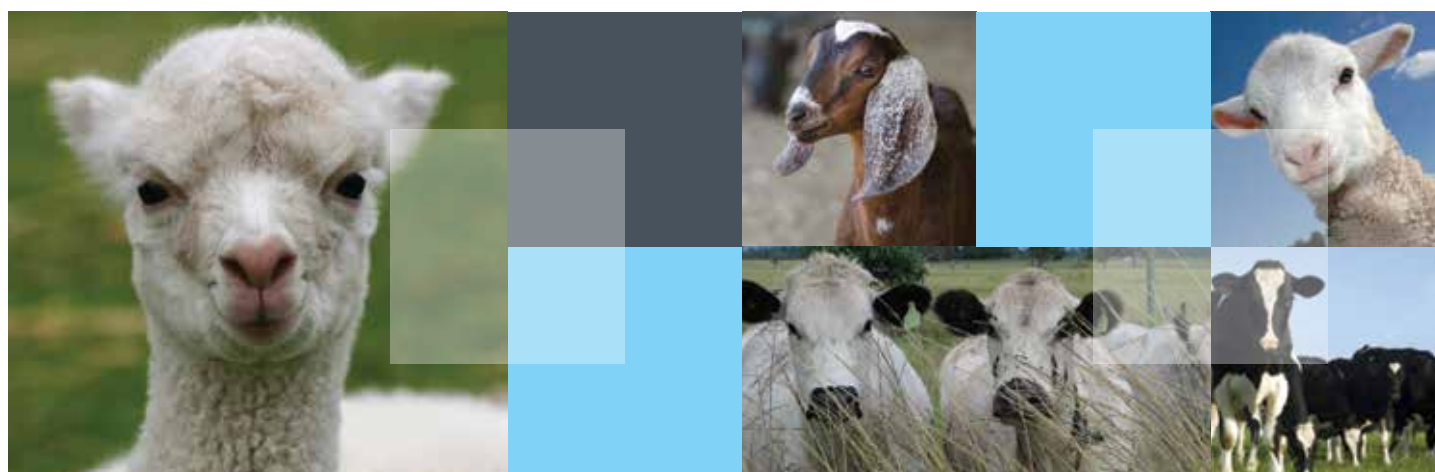
For further information on any of the items in this newsletter please contact Lorna Citer, Manager Endemic Diseases, AHA at [shm@animalhealthaustralia.com.au](mailto:shm@animalhealthaustralia.com.au) on (02) 6203 3922 or visit the AHA website at [www.animalhealthaustralia.com.au](http://www.animalhealthaustralia.com.au)

### OJD

NAME	STATE	ORGANISATION	PHONE	EMAIL
Dr Sam Allan	NSW	Department of Primary Industries	(02) 6763 1103	<a href="mailto:sam.allan@dpi.nsw.gov.au">sam.allan@dpi.nsw.gov.au</a>
Dr Lawrence Gavey	QLD	Department of Agriculture and Fisheries	(07) 4688 1303	<a href="mailto:lawrence.gavey@daf.qld.gov.au">lawrence.gavey@daf.qld.gov.au</a>
Dr Peter Nosworthy	SA	Primary Industries and Regions	(08) 8762 9140	<a href="mailto:peter.nosworthy@sa.gov.au">peter.nosworthy@sa.gov.au</a>
Dr Rowena Bell	TAS	Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment	(03) 6359 2148	<a href="mailto:rowena.bell@dpiwve.tas.gov.au">rowena.bell@dpiwve.tas.gov.au</a>
Dr Alison Lee	VIC	Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources	(03) 5561 9927	<a href="mailto:alison.lee@ecodev.vic.gov.au">alison.lee@ecodev.vic.gov.au</a>
Dr Anna Erickson	WA	Department of Agriculture and Food	(08) 9881 0211	<a href="mailto:anna.erickson@agric.wa.gov.au">anna.erickson@agric.wa.gov.au</a>

### BJD

NAME	STATE	ORGANISATION	PHONE	EMAIL
Dr Graham Bailey	NSW	Department of Primary Industries	(02) 6391 3455	<a href="mailto:graham.bailey@dpi.nsw.gov.au">graham.bailey@dpi.nsw.gov.au</a>
Dr Lawrence Gavey	QLD	Department of Agriculture and Fisheries	(07) 4688 1303	<a href="mailto:lawrence.gavey@daf.qld.gov.au">lawrence.gavey@daf.qld.gov.au</a>
Dr Jeremy Rogers	SA	Primary Industries and Regions	(08) 8539 2110	<a href="mailto:jeremy.rogers@sa.gov.au">jeremy.rogers@sa.gov.au</a>
Dr Debra Grull	TAS	Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment	(03) 6336 5306	<a href="mailto:debra.grull@dpiwve.tas.gov.au">debra.grull@dpiwve.tas.gov.au</a>
Dr Cameron Bell	VIC	Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources	(03) 5430 4545	<a href="mailto:cameron.bell@ecodev.vic.gov.au">cameron.bell@ecodev.vic.gov.au</a>
Dr Tom De Ridder	WA	Department of Agriculture and Food, Western Australia	(08) 9194 1420	<a href="mailto:thomas.deridder@agric.wa.gov.au">thomas.deridder@agric.wa.gov.au</a>
Dr Susanne Fitzpatrick	NT	Department of Primary Industry and Fisheries	(08) 8999 2123	<a href="mailto:susanne.fitzpatrick@nt.gov.au">susanne.fitzpatrick@nt.gov.au</a>



## Snippets

### AWARD RECOGNISES RESEARCHER IMPROVING HEALTH AND WELLBEING FOR CATTLE

AHA's annual Ralph Hood award was awarded to Angela Lees.

Angela has an active research program looking at better ways of measuring and managing heat stress in cattle. She is also investigating the potential benefits of using probiotic food supplements to promote animal health, wellbeing and production efficiency.

Angela will use the Ralph Hood Award to attend two animal science and dairy conferences in the USA and to support a study to investigate the use of probiotics on dairy cow health and performance.

The award honours the memory of Ralph Hood, a former CEO of AHA, who passed away in February 2010.

In recognition of Ralph's contribution, the award is designed to encourage and support a commitment to Australia's national animal health system.



Angela Lees (Left) was presented the Annual Ralph Hood Award by Ralph's wife Patricia at the AHA Annual General Meeting

### VACCINATION ABSCESS IN SHEEP

From the Tasmanian Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment Vet newsletter

A six-year-old ewe, incorrectly vaccinated with Gudair when it was a lamb, was necropsied after it started to show signs of weakness and recumbency.

The vaccine abscess (*See below*) graphically shows the risk to the sheep when Gudair vaccine is applied incorrectly.



### CAE SPREAD BY MATING

Owners of bucks should be wary of having them available for servicing does that have not tested negative for CAE. Bucks can easily become infected from the white blood cells in the vaginal mucous.

This message is reinforced in the British Small Animal Veterinary Association's *Manual of Farm Animal Pets*:

*Infection can be transmitted at mating, although infected females are more likely to transmit to infected males than vice versa.*

What is your policy for accepting does for mating? Do you ask them to bring a copy of their negative CAE test results or herd accreditation certificates?

For more information visit AHA's Goat Health page at <http://bit.ly/1MXuay>

### NEW JD WEBSITE KEEPS US UP-TO-DATE ON THE LATEST RESEARCH

Researchers from the University of Sydney have developed a 'one-stop-shop' website about the latest efforts on research about John's disease.

The website, which is easy to navigate and freely available, is a great resource for producers and vets to learn about the work going on behind the scenes to get on top of this disease.

[www.johnesdiseasesydney.org](http://www.johnesdiseasesydney.org)

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