

## MEDIA RELEASE

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### **National Sheep Health Monitoring Project sets new records, provides easier access to data**

Sheep producers can now see a broader picture of the health of their flock, using carcase data from processing plants around the country.

The data is collected by the National Sheep Health Monitoring Project (NSHMP), managed by Animal Health Australia (AHA) and supported by Sheep Producers Australia and WoolProducers Australia. NSHMP has been active in abattoirs nationwide for over a decade, gathering data on a range of diseases and other conditions which impact producers' profits through increased processing waste and decreased productivity.

Primary Industries and Regions South Australia has also contributed data to NSHMP via the Enhanced Abattoir Surveillance Program (EASP).

"The NSHMP checks carcasses and offal for 19 different conditions which hurt the producers' bottom line, but which are often not visible on-farm," said Dr Rob Barwell, AHA's Senior Manager, Biosecurity.

"Producers can also request inspection for ovine Johne's disease in sheep over two years of age at participating abattoirs."

During the 2017-18 financial year NSHMP captured data from a record number of sheep, having inspected 28,666 lines in 12 abattoirs, totalling more than 6.7 million sheep.

"That's roughly one in every five sheep processed in Australia for that period, which is a huge achievement for the project," said Dr Barwell.

"This means that more producers than ever can access their sheep health data and begin identifying and managing conditions in their flock which hit them in the hip pocket."

Up until now, some state departments of agriculture or primary industries have mailed NSHMP or EASP reports to producers, however this process has now been improved with the addition of NSHMP data to Integrity Systems Company's Livestock Data Link (LDL) portal.

"LDL currently has around 6,500 properties who are able to access their sheep health data as well as information about any conditions that might be being seen in their inspected sheep," said Dr Barwell.

"This means they have access to up-to-date information which can guide them in making management changes or using preventative treatments on-farm to avoid future losses due to trimming or condemnations at the abattoir."

LDL is a free and convenient way for producers to access feedback on how their livestock are performing and any potential disease or health issues that might require management on-farm.

More information about the NSHMP is available at: <https://www.animalhealthaustralia.com.au/nshmp/>

Producers can find out more about LDL at <https://www.mla.com.au/research-and-development/livestock-data-link/>

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#### **About Animal Health Australia**

Animal Health Australia works in partnership with our Members and other stakeholders to keep Australia free of new and emerging diseases and to improve animal health, enhance market access and foster resilience and integrity of the Australian animal health system.