

Tasmanian Livestock Health Report – February 2024

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

See www.animalhealthaustralia.com.au/tas-health for previous reports and to register for a free email subscription, or join the [Tasmanian Livestock Health Facebook group](#)

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

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

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

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

Seasonal Disease Alerts

Acute bovine liver disease (ABLD): use sheep now to graze off paddocks that grow a lot of rough dog's tail weed, so that cattle can graze safely later in autumn.

Barber's pole worm: are still a high risk on irrigation.

Black scour worms: high egg counts are still being seen. Monthly worm egg counts on weaner sheep would be worth doing.

Brown stomach worm: is a summer worm, numbers are building, and they are often resistant to drenches so do a DrenchCheck or Drenchtest if egg counts are 100 epg or more soon after a drench.

Campylobacter abortion in sheep: vaccine course or booster should be completed before joining but you can vaccinate ewe lambs/maidens as rams go in and come out, boost mixed age ewes as rams go in.

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 for another month or two, mainly in dairy cattle but sheep can be affected too.

Flystrike: Flies very active now. Heavy challenge may result in strike in sheep treated through spray races, and with some products.

Liver fluke: Eggs can be present in Fluketests from now on, but blood tests are the best test to detect migrating fluke in live animals.

Lucerne red gut: seen as sudden death with a very bloated carcass on irrigated lucerne or clover. Offering roughage such as hay or straw or alternating between pasture and the lucerne/clover can help prevent cases.

Nematodirus: are still active in weaners. Scouring, sub-optimal growth rates, some Nematodirus eggs in the egg count justify a drench.

Pulpy kidney: Make sure lambs get a booster if going onto rich feed such as clover or lucerne.

Ram check: Check your ram's testes, teeth, feet, and condition score. Consider some high protein supplement from now until mating.

Ryegrass staggers: Active now. Graze off paddocks with a history of staggers with older animals, run weaners on safer pastures.

Scabby mouth: in lambs on feet and mouth.

Biosecurity story of the month – boundary fences and strays

Good fences make good neighbours. I know fences are expensive to build and maintain, but a sound boundary fence, and agreements with neighbours about what to do with your strays, can be very important if you are currently free from diseases like footrot, sheep body lice, drench resistance and mycoplasma and want to stay that way.

Those in the Ovine Brucellosis-free and the SheepMAP programs know that maintaining boundary fences and isolating strays are important. It is valuable to consult with a vet in regard to how to manage those strays as a number of factors will determine the right course of action, depending on what animals they have been in contact with, what diseases you are concerned about and time of year.

If neighbours just drop your sheep back over the fence without informing you, you will not have the opportunity to examine them, isolate them and treat them if necessary. So that conversation with neighbours can be very important.



Diseases and conditions seen in February 2024

SHEEP				
Disease/condition	Number of reports/cases	Region	Details	Prevention, treatment, and other biosecurity advice or measures
Acidosis (grain poisoning)	Thirty lambs died and others ill as ration changed from pellets to wheat	Southern Tasmania	Even though lambs or sheep are used to one concentrate, they can still get grain poisoning as you change.	Found dead or sick with “porridge” scour. Take off grain source and feed roughage. Oral penicillin under veterinary supervision may help. Take just as long to transition to a new grain or concentrate as you do starting them on grain. Go back to daily feeding start with 25grams (weaners) or 50 grams (adult sheep) substituted into the current ration and increase by 25 or 50 grams as appropriate every 2 days.
Arthritis, infectious	Seen in 0.3% of lamb carcasses at the abattoir.	NW, Northern and Southern Tasmania	Seen as lameness and swollen joints. Whole leg will usually be removed at slaughter, often making carcass worthless or dropping it into a lower price grade on the grid.	Removing tails at the third joint (level with tip of vulva in ewe lambs) at marking prevents many cases. Make sure orphan lambs receive sufficient colostrum within 24 hours of birth. Early antibiotic treatment of lame lambs may work. If Erysipelas is diagnosed in the flock, then use Erysipelas vaccine. See fact sheet on: https://sheepconnecttas.com.au/disease-factsheets/
Barbers pole worm	Some high counts seen in Wormtests but not as bad as last year due to	NW, Northern & Southern Tasmania	Sudden death, no scouring, pale gums, lethargy.	See WORMBOSS website for details on diagnosis, control, and prevention programs.

	dryer conditions.			
Bent leg in ram hoggets	One medium mob, about 15% affected	Northern Tasmania	Young unshorn growing sheep last winter on cereal crop. Vitamin D deficiency and calcium imbalance	Give Vitamin D prior to placing young sheep on cereal crop. Offer loose lick containing limestone, magnesium and salt (2:2:1)
Black scour worm	A number of flocks	NW, Northern & Southern Tasmania	High worm egg count, high % Trichostrongylus identified by larval culture at lab.	See WORMBOSS web site for good treatment and prevention strategies.
Cysticercosis ("bladder worm")	Detected at abattoir in 2.6% of lamb carcasses.	NW Southern and Northern Tasmania.	Seen as small clear bags of fluid attached to liver or elsewhere in abdominal cavity of sheep at abattoir. Causes liver to be trimmed or condemned. Spread by a dog tapeworm.	Prevented by stopping dogs from eating sheep offal and/or by treating all dogs including pets with a wormer containing praziquantel every 30 days. Visiting dogs (contractors, shooters) must be treated at least 2 days before arrival on property. Keep stray dogs off the property. These measures also prevent sheep measles and hydatids. See fact sheet on: https://sheepconnecttas.com.au/disease-factsheets/
Bloat and deaths in 2-6 week old, bottle-fed lambs	Several cases	Northern Tasmania	Lambs bloat after feeding and may die. Ulceration and rupture of 4 th stomach seen on postmortem. Caused by Sarcina bacterial infection of 4 th stomach causing excess fermentation and ulceration. Can be seen in calves as well.	Can relieve gas distension of 4 th stomach with needle but needs careful placement. Antibiotics can control the Sarcina infection (consult with your vet first). Feed milk at room temperature, don't make milk up too rich, give small feeds more often, add formalin to milk at 1:1000.
Body condition score low	Widespread	N, NW 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.
Brown stomach worm	Widespread	NW, Northern and Southern Tasmania	Scouring, high worm egg count. Brown stomach worm identified by larval differentiation test at lab.	See WORMBOSS web site for good treatment and prevention strategies. Brown stomach worm more common in summer and are poor egg producers so egg counts not always really high. May be resistant to different drenches compared to Black Scour Worm, our main winter parasite, so drench resistance tests may give very different results in summer vs winter in the same flock.
Bruising	0.05% of lamb carcasses at the abattoir	NW, Northern & Southern Tasmania	Bruising limits market destinations for affected carcasses	Handle sheep calmly and quietly. Repair protruding objects such as bolts in yards.

Cast	One aged wether in one small flock	Northern Tasmania	Very old pet wether.	Lost condition, became weak, and got cast often so was euthanased.
Cellulitis (infection) with gas formation	One lamb in one flock	Southern Tasmania	Both front legs swollen with gas under the skin.	Gas formation usually seen with Clostridial infections. This lamb had been vaccinated but maybe vaccine did not work, or a different type of Clostridia may have been involved. Penicillin under veterinary supervision may work, but this one was euthanased.
Cheek lump	A number of weaned lambs in one large flock	Northern Tasmania	Lump under skin of cheek	Most likely a vaccination lesion. Vaccines should be injected under the skin on the side of the neck a hand's width below the ear.
Cheesy gland (CLA)	Seen in 2.6% of lamb carcasses at the abattoir	NW, Northern & Southern Tasmania.	Bacterial infection that causes abscesses in the glands – seen as lumps full of pus in front of shoulder, thigh, in groin and internally	Use of vaccine has made this disease less common now but would return if producers stopped using it.
Cud stain	Small numbers of sheep on two properties	Northern & Southern Tasmania	Green stain around mouth.	Check mouth and tongue for grass seed damage, infections etc.
Dags	Widespread but mainly in a small proportion of sheep.	NW, Northern and Southern Tasmania	Due to scouring.	May be due to worms, gut infection (e.g. Salmonella, Yersinia, coccidia), nutritional factors. Have a WORMTEST egg count done and ask the laboratory to check for coccidia, culture for Yersinia and Salmonella 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/flystrike/latest
Dog bite	Seen in 0.3% of lamb carcasses at abattoir	NW, Northern & Southern Tasmania	Bruising and puncture wounds trimmed at abattoir	Muzzle dogs that bite.
Ear cancer	Two sheep in two medium flocks	Northern & Southern Tasmania.	Ulcerated mass on ear.	Older sheep with white ears without much wool cover. Cull as soon as noticed. Can be treated surgically by a veterinarian. Can spread to glands draining that area so check parotid lymph node before performing surgery.
Feet deformed	One weaner in one medium flock	Northern Tasmania	Probably present at birth (congenital – hereditary of mineral imbalance or weed ingestion by ewe) but could be due to injury or unbalanced mineral levels in diet	Cull the lamb. If too many may be worth veterinary investigation.
Flystrike	Widespread. Body strike even in composite ewes in short wool.	NW, N and Southern Tasmania	Breech, body, shoulder, poll strike in rams, pizzle strike in wethers. Foot strike	Observe for damp, grey areas of wool, tail flicking, separation from mob, lying down. The AWI web site has a large number of resources and runs workshops on flystrike. See: https://www.wool.com/simplify

			(secondary to footrot or foot abscess). Sheep with footrot struck over ribs from lying on infected foot.	Use preventative treatments or examine every 2 days and treat as soon as found. Destroy maggots.
Foot abscess (heel abscess)	Healed or healing lesions in a small % of ewes and rams in several flocks	Northern and Southern Tasmania.	Swelling of one toe, hot, painful and discharge pus in acute stage. 'Club foot' 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, and anti-inflammatories under vet supervision, keep feet dry eg on slatted floor of shearing shed, place epsom salts on drainage point and bandage. Ensure fit to load if transported.
Footrot, virulent	Several large properties	Southern, Northern Tasmania	Low % on dryland and after pre-lamb vaccination in 2023 or summer eradication in 2023 with 2 nd inspection in autumn.	Eradication inspections continuing now in most areas and some good cure rates from footbathing and vaccinating have been seen. Footbathing and vaccination, paring, culling "chronics" that don't respond to treatment are ongoing strategies. Long acting oxytetracycline antibiotics under veterinary supervision is useful to treat chronic cases now and if conditions stay dry. 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: https://www.wool.com/globalassets/wool/sheep/welfare/other-husbandry/footrot--a-guide-to-identification-and-control-in-the-field---tas-2019.pdf
Footrot (intermediate)	One medium flock	Southern 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.	Responding well to footbathing in this flock. Paring, footbathing, culling chronic cases, use of vaccine. Eradication by repeated foot inspections and culling all infected sheep can 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 virulent 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
Growth rates low in lambs	One large flock	Southern Tasmania	Lambs not growing as they should.	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. These may have got off to a poor start due to low milk production by ewes and early weaning plus some worm problems.
Hooves overgrown	A number of ewes in several small and large flocks. Also, lambs after rearing on milk replacer.	NW, Northern & Southern Tasmania	Toe of hoof very long, can curl up. Soft ground, scald and footrot can be underlying cause.	Regular trimming. Control scald /footrot if present. Lambs reared on milk replacer may have suffered from a mineral or vitamin deficiency or imbalance.
Horn infected	One wether	Northern Tasmania	Horn was damaged and became infected	Was treated but infection entered the sinuses, and the wether was eventually euthanased.

Horn wound	One wether in one large flock	Southern Tasmania	Sharp horn caught inside hind leg and caused severe laceration.	Wound drainage and removal of dead tissue by veterinarian was required along with anti-inflammatory and antibiotics.
Interdigital dermatitis (OID)	One flock	Southern Tasmania	Reddening between toes with matting of interdigital hair but no hair loss. Looks similar to scald (benign footrot).	Take swabs and smears on glass slides so lab can stain and examine for footrot bacteria. If no footrot bacteria, OID is diagnosed. Treated by footbathing or by anti-bacterial sprays.
Lameness after oily vaccine administration	A number of ewes	Southern Tasmania	Lame on way back to paddock. No foot conditions present in the mob.	Possibly intra-muscular rather than subcutaneous (under the skin) injection. Veterinary investigation recommended if still lame after a couple of days.
Lameness, chronic, in adult ram	One ram in one flock	Southern Tasmania	Ram lame for several months, one femur feels different to other.	Maybe an old injury or arthritis with muscle wastage. Anti-inflammatories under veterinary supervision.
Lice (body lice)	One large flock	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.
Liver fluke	Detected at abattoir in 1.3% of lamb carcasses.	Northern and Southern Tasmania	Abattoir detection, farm postmortem or Fluke eggs found in FLUKETEST on manure samples sent to laboratory. Bottle jaw, anaemia, weight loss and deaths from heavy infestation.	Some fluke are adult stage in bile ducts in liver at this time of year but pickup of immatures will be common now. Triclabendazole best treatment from November to June as it kills immature fluke as well as mature fluke. See fact sheet on https://sheepconnecttas.com.au/disease-factsheets/
Nasal discharge, snotty, both nostrils, some with cough	A number of lambs in a number of flocks	NW, Northern & 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.
Nasal Bot	One wether in one small flock	Southern Tasmania	Discharge from one nostril, some swelling of one side of nose. Bot seen	Nasal bots are the larvae of a fly that lays the eggs on the nostrils of the sheep. The eggs hatch and the larvae crawl up the nasal passage and later into the frontal sinus of the sheep, then mature, crawl back out, pupate in the soils and become a new fly. Cause snotty nose, sneezing. Adult flies cause sheep to cease feeding and try to protect their noses.

			coming out of nose.	Rarely seen since ML drenches became common. Treat with ML drench, closantel or rafonoxide.
Nematodirus	Widespread in weaners	NW, Northern and Southern Tasmania	Weaners scour and have lowered 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.
Ocular (eye) discharge, clear, one eye	A number of weaners from one large flock	Northern Tasmania	Most likely barley grass seed.	Control barley grass with intensive rotational grazing, herbicide or topping. Grass seeds should be removed from eye as soon as possible and an eye ointment or spray administered.
Ocular (eye) discharge both eyes	A number of lambs from one large flock.	Southern Tasmania	Could be first stage of Pinkeye	Best to leave alone and keep checking, if possible, only yard and treat if you have to.
Ovine Johnes' disease (OJD)	Steady trickle of deaths and euthanasias in unvaccinated wethers in one large flock	Southern Tasmania	Adult sheep over 2 yrs. old waste away over several months and die despite drenching.	Quickest diagnosis is by postmortem. Prevent by vaccinating lambs at marking with Gudair vaccine. If confirmed present in the flock, cull any sheep over 18 months of age that waste away and don't respond to drenching. See factsheet on: http://www.ojd.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/OJD_factsheet.pdf and www.ojd.com
Pasteurellosis	A number of ewes died in one medium flock	Northern Tasmania	A number of ewes found dead and some down or sick a day or two after a surgical procedure.	Acute pneumonia due to Pasteurella was diagnosed from postmortem specimens. The bacteria may have spread during yarding and shedding, and the stress of the procedure may have also been a factor.
Pink eye	Widespread	NW, Northern & Southern Tasmania	Discharge down cheeks, white areas on cornea of eye. Usually spread by flies, long grass and close contact (e.g. 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 veterinary supervision. Eye ointments/sprays less effective.
Photosensitisation	A number of lambs in a number of flocks	NW, Northern & Southern Tasmania	Skin peels off face and 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 only if liver not damaged, antibiotics, if necessary, under veterinary supervision, offer deep shade, move to new paddock.
Pleurisy	Detected at abattoir in 0.06% of lamb carcasses.	NW, Southern and Northern Tasmania	Lungs stuck to chest wall. Usually results in major trimming.	Treat sick sheep with cough or respiratory distress with antibiotics. Try to avoid stress events, drench sheep carefully, avoid dusty feedstuffs.
Runts	A small number of lambs from one small flock	Northern Tasmania	Stunted lambs that are unlikely to grow out. May have been orphaned or	Best euthanased but can try high protein/high energy feed (introduce slowly).

			suffered from illness.	
Ryegrass staggers	A number of weaner sheep in two large flocks	Southern 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://dpiwve.tas.gov.au/biosecurity-tasmania/animal-biosecurity/animal-health/sheep/perennial-ryegrass-staggers for details on diagnosis treatment and prevention.
Sarcosporidia ("Sarco")	Detected at abattoir in 0.15% of lamb & hogget carcasses.	NW, Southern and Northern Tasmania	Small 'rice grain' whitish raised lesions on outside of food pipe (oesophagus), diaphragm and in skeletal muscles. Carcase trimmed or condemned.	Spread by cats. Takes a long time to grow so not usually seen in young lambs. Deny cats access to sheep meat, burn or bury carcasses promptly, eradicate feral cats over large area. See fact sheet on: https://sheepconnecttas.com.au/disease-factsheets/
Scabby Mouth	A small number of lambs in one medium mob	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
Seeds and under skin and on surface of skinned carcase.	Seen in 0.6% of lamb carcasses	Northern & Southern Tasmania	Grass seeds (usually barley grass) penetrates skin and causes extensive trimming in the abattoir.	Barley grass can be controlled with strategic grazing, herbicides, or slashing.
Sheep measles	Detected at abattoir in 2.3% of lamb carcasses.	Northern and Southern Tasmania	Small whitish mass about half the size of a 5-cent piece protruding from the muscle of the heart, diaphragm or skeletal muscle. Carcase is trimmed or condemned if too many to trim. This is the intermediate stage of a dog tapeworm.	Prevented by stopping dogs from eating raw sheep meat. Freeze sheep carcase meat for 2 weeks before feeding to dogs, burn/bury sheep carcasses promptly and treat all dogs including pets with a wormer containing praziquantel every 30 days. Visiting dogs (contractors, shooters) must be treated 2 days before arrival on property. Keep stray dogs off the property. See fact sheet on https://sheepconnecttas.com.au/disease-factsheets/

Shelly toe	Widespread	NW, Northern & Southern Tasmania	Curved separation of hoof wall from sole up hoof wall near front of hoof.	Conformational defect rather than a disease condition. Is heritable and can be selected against. Best to pare off under-run hoof wall as dirt and manure can pack into the cleft and cause a form of toe abscess.
Small soft testes in rams	Two ram weaners in one medium flock	NW Tasmania	Testicles both small and soft. Rams should have full, springy testicles.	In this case may just be young age and low bodyweight. Could also be due to overheating event within last 6 weeks. Review birth date and growth rate and illness/overheating (e.g. shedding in hot weather) records. Remove from shed, feed well, re-assess in 6 weeks.
Sudden death of ram	One ram just after moving to cull mob.	Northern Tasmania	Ram found dead	Most likely fighting injury e.g. broken neck, but could be summer pneumonia, plant poisoning, acute Salmonella. Postmortem examination ideal if carcass fresh enough.
Teste smaller on one side	One ram weaner in one moderate flock	NW Tasmania	Can be due to late dropping of teste into scrotum.	Can reflect tendency to cryptorchid (testicle/s retained inside body) and best not used for breeding.
Toe crack	One ram in one large herd	Southern Tasmania	Vertical cracks in the toe of the hoof from coronary band to tip of toe.	May be conformation (and possibly hereditary) vitamin/mineral deficiency or dry cold conditions. Pare the feet. If lame may need to pare, cut out all damaged hoof horn and check for hoof abscess. Feed dietary supplement with copper, zinc, vitamins A, D, and biotin.
Vaccination lesions	A small number of sheep in two large flocks.	Northern Tasmania	These were under the skin but in one case on the face.	Vaccination, even though under the skin, over the cheeks can interfere with nerves that control lips and cheeks and is not recommended. 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
Worms	Widespread	NW, Northern and Southern Tasmania.	Moderate to high faecal egg count. Some high enough to be barbers pole worm.	Differentiate from nutritional scour or coccidia by WORMTEST. 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-lamb drenched ewes. See WORMBOSS at: http://www.wormboss.com.au/sheep-goats/programs/sheep.php

CATTLE

Bare area on poll	One bull in one large herd	Northern Tasmania	hair loss from poll	May have been due to fighting with other bulls. Segregate bulls that are weaker than the rest or injured as other bulls will take advantage and beat them up. Some fighting and sorting out of the 'pecking order' is normal.
Bare areas on hips and pins	A small number of cows in two medium herds	Northern Tasmania	probably empty cows that were bulling and ridden by other cows with sharp accessory digits.	Minor problem.
Corkscrew claw	Several cows and bulls in several herds	NW, Northern Tasmania	Outside claw on hind or fore foot grows up off ground in corkscrew form	Genetic cause. Cull. Can trim the hoof to keep the cow going until she weans a calf.

Cryptorchid (“stag’, “rig”)	Three male calves in one large herd	Southern Tasmania	Usually, one testicle is not in scrotum.	In these cases, the testicle was under the skin in front of the scrotum and a vet easily removed it surgically. The other testicle was also removed as cryptorchidism is hereditary. Try to identify the bull that is throwing these calves and cull him or not keep any of his progeny for breeding.
Dags	One bull in one small herd	Northern Tasmania	Dried faeces stuck on tail hair.	Previous scour. Worms, dietary factors, bacterial and viral diseases can all be causes in adult cattle. Bovine Johnes Disease (BJD) can be suspected if animal is also in poor condition.
Empty heifers at pregnancy testing	A higher than expected % of empty heifers in one large herd	Northern Tasmania	A small number were examined at the abattoir and half were pregnant. Pregnancy testing was conducted too early to detect these pregnancies.	Make sure that the bulls have been removed from the herd for at least 6 weeks before pregnancy testing.
Foot abscess	One cow in a mob of 6 cattle	Northern Tasmania	This one healed, foot enlarged with scar tissue.	No action required if cow is taking sufficient weight on that leg.
Hair loss on one area of upper tail in a steer	One steer in one large herd	Northern Tasmania	May be the start of chorioptic mange or injury	This one probably a rub injury from loading or transport. Skin scrapings may be worth taking if seen as a problem worth investigating.
Horn growing into head (in-grown horn)	One bull in one large herd	Southern Tasmania	Horn has grown into and damaged the skin.	May result in animal welfare penalties if presented at saleyards or abattoirs. Horns must be trimmed on-farm. Ask your vet for some embryotomy wire as it allows horn to be removed safely. Prevention: Dehorn calves so that a margin of haired skin is removed with horn.
Horning wounds	One steer in a pen of 4 horned Friesian steers	Northern Tasmania.	Bruising due to horning during transport is a significant cause of trimming in abattoir.	Use polled breeds, dehorn (under 6 months of age), or at least ‘tip’ the horns so that less damage is done. Transport horned cattle separately from polled.
Lameness, chronic, in cow	One cow in one herd	Southern Tasmania	Lame for several months, poor response to anti-inflammatories, stifle swollen.	If ligaments in stifle are badly damaged or ruptured, cow may never recover normal gait. Euthanasia needs to be considered at some time.
Mycoplasma outbreak	One large dairy herd	Northern Tasmania	Some or all of late abortions, pneumonia, arthritis, eye disease, mastitis, calf disease can be seen.	Practice good hygiene when administering dry cow intramammary drying off products. Prevention: isolate and test introduced cattle. More information: https://www.farmbiosecurity.com.au/mycoplasma-ovis-look-after-your-herd-and-your-back-pocket/
Nasal discharge, purulent (snotty)	One cow in one large 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.

Ocular (eye) discharge (clear, watery) both eyes	A small number of cattle in a number of herds.	NW, Northern and Southern Tasmania	Usually caused by an irritant such as pollen, dust etc but can be first stage of Pink Eye.	May not be possible to remove from irritants. Observe again later to make sure Pink Eye is not developing.
Ocular (eye) discharge (clear, watery) only one eye	A small number of cattle in a number of herds.	NW, Northern Tasmania	Usually, an injury or foreign body but can also be due to eye cancer in older cows.	Examine for foreign bodies in crush. Treat with eye ointment. Observe again later to make sure Pink Eye is not developing.
Pink Eye	Widespread	NW Tasmania	Some of: inflamed conjunctivae, 'blue' eye, discharge down cheeks, yellow pus inside eye, ulceration of cornea, eye rupture in worst cases.	Start treatment early. Separate affected cattle, use eye ointments, antibiotic injection into eyelids, eye patches or vet can stitch eyelids. If not treated early, eye can rupture. There is a vaccine available that covers most of the strains of pink eye bacteria that occur in Tasmania. See: https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0017/103904/pinkeye-in-cattle.pdf
Ringworm	Four weaners in one small herd	Southern Tasmania	Scaly circular areas of hair loss with thick whitish crust usually around head and neck.	Usually heal up eventually if left alone. Antifungal ointments or iodine can be rubbed into lesions. Can spread to people so precautions must be taken.
Scrotal mange	One bull in one large herd	Southern Tasmania	Inflammation and crusts on scrotum, usually caused by a tiny mite called <i>Chorioptes bovis</i> , often seen in Merino rams but can affect cattle.	The <i>Chorioptes bovis</i> mite lives on cattle and other species and survives for a number of days off the host so is hard to eradicate. Individually effected bulls can be treated – see your vet.
Stomach fluke (Paramphistomes)	Eggs detected in faecal sample from calves, but no disease seen.	Northern Tasmania	Can cause scours in calves and lambs as immature fluke migrate up intestines to reticulum (first stomach or 'honeycomb')	Rare in Tasmania but does occur in similar wet environments to liver fluke. Diagnosis depends on identifying immature flukes or eggs in faeces. Consult with your vet is suspected.
Tetanus	One calf in one herd	Southern Tasmania	Third eyelids had come across but despite treatment full symptoms developed - lying on side with neck and legs all stiff, mouth cannot	This one immediately post marking, cow and calf had not been vaccinated. Treatment often unsuccessful. Prevention is by the use of 5-in-1 vaccine in the cow pre-calving. Calves should be given first shot of 5-in-1 at marking and a second 4-6 weeks alter or at weaning.

			be opened (lockjaw)	
Toe crack	One bull in one large herd	Northern Tasmania	Vertical splits in the toe of the hoof from coronary band to tip of toe.	May be conformation (and possibly hereditary), injury to coronary band, vitamin/mineral deficiency or dry cold conditions. Pare the feet. If lame may need to pare, cut out all damaged hoof horn and check for hoof abscess. Feed dietary supplement with copper, zinc, vitamins A, D and biotin.
Warts	One weaner bull in one small herd	Northern Tasmania	Small cauliflower-like growth anywhere on body but often around head.	Normally only seen in young cattle. Will normally self-cure if left alone. A vaccine can be made up if warts persist or are very extensive.
Worms	A number of weaners and young cattle in a number of herds	NW, Northern and Southern Tasmania	High faecal egg count.	Differentiate from nutritional scour or coccidia by WORMTEST. Use effective drench. Check that drench is working by repeating egg count 10-14 days later. Try to plan 'clean' paddocks for weaned calves. See WORMBOSS at: https://wormboss.com.au/wormboss-resources/?species=Cattle&soia=cattle&region=TAS&season=Autumn%2C+Spring%2C+Summer%2C+Winter
ALPACAS and CAMELS				
Mange	Three of five alpacas in one small herd	NW Tasmania	Skin bare and crusty	Probably chorioptic or sarcoptic mange. See your vet for a treatment program.
GOATS				
Worms	A number of goats in one small and one large herd	Northern and Southern Tasmania	Scouring, losing weight, lethargic, snotty noses	Confirm with egg count. Treat with drenches registered for goats or off-label as per vets instructions.
PIGS				
No cases reported				
POULTRY				
No cases reported				
DEER				
No cases reported				

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: <https://www.mla.com.au/meat-safety-and-traceability/WhatismyFeedback/> 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 material 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 post mortem investigation (https://animalhealthaustralia.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Bucks-for-Brains_Jun16_WEB.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 \$264 million worth of sheep meats and wool in 2020-21. See:

<https://nre.tas.gov.au/agriculture/facts-figures/tasmanian-agri-food-scorecards>

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/>