Livestock Health Monitoring Report – November 2018

The Tasmanian Livestock Health Monitoring Report is a pilot project designed to confidentially gather information on diseases and conditions in livestock in Tasmania, with some emphasis on sheep and Southern Tasmania.

The project has been established to convince our overseas trading partners that we don't have livestock diseases that they are concerned about, to keep our valuable export markets open and to stop risky imports coming in.

This information is collected confidentially from livestock industry service providers.

You are welcome to distribute this report to anyone you like.  
The next Livestock Health Monitoring report will be out in mid January.

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

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **SHEEP** | | | | |
| **Disease/condition** | **Number of reports/cases** | **Region** | **Details** | **Prevention, treatment, and other biosecurity advice or measures** |
| Bent legs in lambs (Chondrodysplasia) | One flock, one lamb | Southern Tasmania | Front legs deformed, bent in or out at knees. | Can be hereditary (Suffolk, South Down, Hampshire, Cheviot), due to eating wild parsnip, from calcium/phosphorus mineral imbalance or of unknown cause. Splinting, surgery or euthanasia. |
| Black udder in ewes | Several ewes, two flocks. | Northern and Southern Tasmania | One half of udder goes cold and grey, blood-stained fluid can be milked out of teat. Usually caused by a Staph bacteria. | Acute cases caught early – treat with antibiotic and pain relief. If teat is cold and dead, remove it so toxic fluids can drain. Isolate from flock. A lot of udder tissue will die, must be gently cleaned out and can heal up over time. |
| Contracted tendons in front legs in lambs | Two flocks, small numbers of lambs. | Northern and Southern Tasmania | Lambs unable to walk, properly. Unable to stretch front legs out fully. | One case last month associated with low levels of Manganese but one of these tested had normal Manganese. |
| Cough, persistent, in ewes, then their lambs. | One flock | Southern Tasmania | Ewes and lambs cough, little response to lungworm drench | If little response to lungworm drench then probably an infection. May be virus. Use antibiotics if production loss/deaths occur and post mortem indicates bacterial involvement. |
| Cystic/cancerous udders in XB milking ewes | One flock, small numbers of ewes. | Southern Tasmania | Very enlarged deformed udders. | Cull. |
| Dermo (Lumpy wool) | Three medium wool, spring shorn flocks, 5% of hoggets. | Northern Tasmania | Usually young sheep in wet years. These all shorn as lambs | Long-acting oxytetracycline injection after it stops raining, wait 6-8 weeks and shear. Wool still saleable. Prevention- avoid yarding sheep when wet to the skin. |
| Downer ewe with eye damage by crows. | One case | Southern Tasmania | Full wool and in good condition. | Hold ewe up on feet and massage legs until she can walk off. Eye ointment for eye damage. Maintain BCS 3, shear every 8-12 months. |
|
|
| Entropian (turned-in eyelids) in lambs. | Multiple cases, several flocks | Northern and Southern Tasmania | Lower eyelid turns in and eyelashes rub on cornea of eye causing discharge and partial blindness | Usually hereditary. Roll eyelid back out and apply eye ointment. Injecting half a ml of antibiotic under skin of affected leyelids can also work. |
|
|
| Face lice | One flock | Southern Tasmania | Sucking lice, larger and darker than body lice, attach around head but seen over body in heavy infestations. | Drench mob with ML family drench. Repeat in 15 days if short-acting ML. |
|
| Fly strike | Many cases | Widespread, very severe in Derwent valley. | Mostly breech strike but body strike too. | Identify and correct causes of scouring. Chemical preventative treatments or frequent inspection and early treatment of strikes. |
|
| Foot abscess | Several flocks | Widespread | Foot abscess was relatively common in heavy ewes, especially if bearing multiples, not shorn recently or in crops with muddy conditions underfoot. Most cases in healing phase now. | Keep mob average BCS to 3 - 3.3, pre-lamb shear, reduce interdigital skin injury, walk through 5-10% formalin footbath weekly. Treat with long-acting broad-spectrum antibiotics, keep feet dry eg on slatted floor of shearing shed, epsom salts on drainage point and bandage, preferentially feed to prevent pregnancy toxaemia. |
| Footrot | Several properties | Widespread | Footrot actively spreading in lambs and ewes. | Responding well to footbathing. Plan eradication if possible when conditions underfoot dry out. |
| Lice (body lice) | Many cases | Widespread | Sheep body lice causing wool damage in many flocks. | Suppressive long-wool treatments can be used, watch wool handling and harvesting restrictions. Good separation of mobs if different shearing/treatment times. Use more recent lice products and good treatment technique for offshears eradication when shorn. Complete musters, good fences. |
| Lumpy jaw | Several cases, one flock | Northern Tasmania | Bony swelling of lower jaw around incisor teeth | Cause unknown. Sheep condition not affected in early stages. Cull. |
| Mycoplasma ovis anaemia in lambs | Two outbreaks in one flocks | Southern Tasmania | Usually seen several weeks after marking, rarely at marking. Lambs can’t walk far when mustered , pale gums, deaths. | Bug spread by marking equipment or insects destroys red blood cells resulting in anaemia. Lambs will recover if left alone on good feed and water form 4-6 weeks. Can treat whole mob with oxytetracycline antibiotic. |
| Navel ill (infected belly button) in lambs | Several cases, in several flocks | Southern and Northern Tasmania | Wet and mushy around the belly button (umbilicus) or seen as large swelling (abscess) on flank near belly button | Try to lamb in clean paddocks without too much mud. Good colostrum intake in first 12 hrs of life. Can treat with broad-spectrum antibiotics. |
| Ovine Johne’s Disease (OJD) | One flock | Southern Tasmania | Adult sheep lose weight, may or may not scour, don’t respond to drench, die within weeks to months. | Best diagnosis by post mortem on typical case. Use Gudair vaccine at marking or weaning every year. Reduces losses to very low levels over time. Can start off by vaccinating whole flock. |
| PEM (polioencephalomalacia) | Three flocks, 1 confirmed 3 suspected | Northern and Southern Tasmania | ‘Star gazing’, blindness, other neurological signs, deaths | Usually associated with rich diet. Treat early with Vitamin B1 injections. Animal Health Australia subsidies available for post mortems on neurological cases. |
| Pneumonia in pet lamb | One pet lamb in one small flock | Southern Tas | Respiratory distress. | This one responded well to antibiotics. |
| Puffy knees in stud rams | One flock | Northern Tas | Skin over knees swollen. Unknown cause. | These responded well to time and rest. |
| Scabby Mouth | Low % of lambs | Three flocks, Northern and Southern Tasmania | In one flock 5% affected despite being vaccinated at marking | Vaccinate at marking. Vaccine must not be frozen. Follow label instructions for applying vaccine. |
| Scald | One flock. Lambs but not ewes on irrigated pasture | Northern Tasmania | Lambs lame with score 1 and 2 lesions (less than 2mm under-running of hoof horn at heel) | Also called benign footrot. Re-check in 14 days to ensure not progressing to virulent footrot. Usually responds to footbathing and dry conditions underfoot. |
| Scrotal mange | Northern Tasmania | One flock | Bare crusty area at bottom of scrotum. Can affect pasterns as well in severe cases. | May result in lowered fertility if more than 10 square cm of scrotum affected. See vet for treatment. |
| Scours in XB lambs with low egg counts | One flock, small number of lambs | Northern Tasmania | Thought to be due to eating weeds | Some weeds such as capeweed can cause scours. Could also be due to mild bacterial gut infection or worms. If problem becomes significant some testing worthwhile. Hard to control capeweed at this time of year. |
| Scouring with high egg counts | Many cases | Widespread | Prolonged parasite season due to wet November in many areas | Use WORMTEST regularly or to confirm cause of scouring. Check drenches are working with DRENCHTEST 10-14 days after drenching |
| Swollen teste in ram | One case, one flock | Southern Tasmania | One testicle enlarged and painful. | Could be due to infection, trauma or strangulation of cord. Treat with antibiotics, anti-inflammatories or surgical removal. If other teste undamaged ram may still be fertile. |
| Toe abscess | Several cases, one flock | Northern Tasmania | Foot not swollen, but very lame. Black mark at point of toe seen when pared back, mean pus can drain out at coronary band at front of hoof. | Pare point of toe carefully until pus is released (may be ‘dirty’ and small volume). Antibiotics and pain relief. |
| Vulval deformity in ewe lambs | Widespread | Northern and Southern Tasmania | Urine staining of breech wool. Thought to genetic. | May be best not to breed from affected ewe lambs. |
| **CATTLE** | | | | |
| Calf deaths | Multiple cases in one herd | Southern Tasmania | Well-grown calves 2-6 weeks after marking. Froth at mouth. | Possibly plant or lead poisoning or Clostridial disease. Check paddock for plants, old batteries, vaccinate with 5-in1. Post mortem if fresh body found. |
| Cooperia worms in 15 month old cattle | Multiple cases in one herd | Northern Tasmania | Well-grown yearlings growing well, but egg counts up to 700 epg | Most text books claim Cooperia worms don’t hurt cattle much and disappear by 12 months old. Experience has been that Cooperia can harm weaners. These older cattle don’t appear to be clinically affected. May still treat to reduce pasture larvae contamination for next years weaners. |
| Eye cancer in Angus cow. | One case in one herd | Southern Tasmania | Growth or ulceration of eye or eyelid. More common in breeds with white pigmentation around eye. | Very early growths can be frozen, burnt (electrocautery) or scraped off. More advanced require surgery. Severe require euthanasia. Don’t transport if cow can’t close eyelid over growth. |
|
|
| Foot injury/infection in calf | One case in one herd | Southern Tasmania | Only one claw affected | Antibiotics and anti-inflammatories. Keep dry, restrict movement. |
|
| Grass seeds in eyes | Several cases in one herd | Southern Tasmania | Discharge down cheeks as in Pink Eye | Examine eye carefully, especially behind third eyelid. Remove all grass seed carefully. Antibiotics and anti-inflammatories. Control Barley grass. |
|
| Incomplete castration by rubber rings | Several cases in one herd | Southern Tasmania | Rubber rings used to castrate bull calves | Rubber rings should only be used on bull calves up to 2 weeks of age. |
|
| Pneumonia/travel sickness in cattle | One mob of imported cattle | Southern Tasmania | Difficulty breathing after long journey. | Treat with antibiotics and anti-inflammatories. Prevention – reduce stresses and contacts with other cattle during long journeys. |
| Virus (suspected) infection in steers | 3 affected, 2 deaths on one property. | Southern Tasmania | Recently transported from Northern Tas. | Antibiotic cover and good nursing |
| Wooden Tongue in cows | Two cases in one herd | Northern Tasmania | Difficulty eating, tongue may stick out a bit. | Intravenous iodine given by vet usually best treatment. Antibiotic injections may work. Reduce access to spikey plants. |
| **ALPACAS** | | | | |
| Nasal dermatitis | One case in one herd | Southern Tasmania | Skin changes over nose. | Check for facial eczema, scabby mouth or photosensitization, treat accordingly. |
| **PIGS** | | | | |
| Lice | One herd | Southern Tasmania | Sucking lice, large (4-6 mm long) and dark, seen in neck folds, ears and all over body in heavy infestations. Only survive a few days off pig. | A number of sprays, injections and in-feed medications can be used. Best to re-treat after 10 days to break life cycle. |
|
| **Goats** | | | | |
| Lice | Several herds | Southern Tasmania | Goats can be infested with both sucking lice (large and dark), and body lice (smaller, lighter colour) Only survive a few days off goat. | Sprays, pour-on and powder treatments available. Re-treat (sprays, powder) after 15 days to break life cycle. |
|
| Wasting in adult goats | One herd | Southern Tasmania | Could be chronic worms, liver fluke, Johne’s disease, or Caprine Arthritis Encphalitis (CAE). | Treat for worms and fluke. Have vet investigate if little response. |
|
| Worms in weaner goats | One herd | Southern Tasmania | Scouring, losing weight | Confirm with egg count. Treat with drenches registered for goats or off-label as per vet’s instructions. |