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| **SHEEP** | | | | |
| **Disease/condition** | **Number of reports/cases** | **Region** | **Details** | **Prevention, treatment, and other biosecurity advice or measures** |
| Arthritis in lambs | Many cases | Widespread | Lambs several weeks after birth, or after marking become lame, swollen joint/s. | Infection via navel after birth or orally can be reduced by encouraging good colostrum intake in first 12 hours of lfe. Have ewes on good feed so they start to lactate without delay. Post-marking arthritis reduced by removing tails at third joint (level with tip of vulva in ewe lambs). Submit recently affected lambs or joints to laboratory to culture for Erysipelas and use vaccine if detected. |
| Arthritis aged ewe | 1 | Northern Tas | Aged ewe lame with swollen hock. | Anti-inflammatory injections. Euthanasia if not responsive. |
| Black scour worm (Trichostrongylus) | Many cases | Southern Tasmania | Black scour resulted in some losses and heavily dagged ewes at lamb marking in cases where a long-acting anthelmintic was not used at pre-lamb drench time. | Long-acting drenches or capsules given to pre-lambing ewes. Faecal egg count monitoring sheep in winter. Prepare ‘clean” lambing paddocks if possible. |
| Bloat in 2-6 week old bottle-fed lambs | Several cases | Southern and Northern Tasmania | Lambs bloat after feeding and may die. Ulceration and rupture of 4th stomach seen on post mortem. Caused by Sarcina bacterial infection of 4th stomach causing excess fermentation and ulceration. Can be seen in calves as well. | Can relieve gas distension of 4th stomach with needle but needs careful placement. Antibiotics can control the Sarcina infection. Feed milk at room temperature, don’t make milk up too rich. |
| Chickweed (Stellaria media) poisoning | 1 | Southern Tasmania | Mixed aged ewes, Scouring due to presence of saponins. | Make sure sheep are not hungry when moved to area dominated by chickweed. |
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| Ear cancer | 1 | Southern Tasmania | Aged ewes | Surgery is possible if cancer has not extended to gland below ear, but not economic. Euthanase. Only transport if skin unbroken. |
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| Foot abscess | Many cases | Southern and Northern Tasmania | Foot abscess was relatively common in heavy ewes, especially if bearing multiples, not shorn recently or in crops with muddy conditions underfoot.. | Keep mob average BCS to 3 - 3.3, pre-lamb shear, reduce interdigital skin injury, walk thrugh 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 | NE and Southern Tas | Footrot actively spreading in lambs and ewes. | Responding well to footbathing. Plan eradication if possible when conditions underfoot dry out. |
| Goitre in neonatal lamb | 1 | Northern Tas | Twin lambs died shortly after birth. Enlarged thyroid glands | Drench ewes pre-lambing with 300 mg of potassium iodide dissolved in water. |
| Grain poisoning in ewes on grain lick feeders | 1 | Southern Tas | Ewes found dead or bloated and down. Slide on lick feeder became loose. | Treat: drench affected ewes with bicarb mixed with plenty of water to combat acidosis. Prevention includes securing slides, can feed buffers with grain, some contain bitter compounds to reduce risk of eating too much grain at one time. |
| Inflamed inter-digital gland in adult sheep | 1 | Northern Tas | Inter-digital gland at top of inter-digital cleft enlarged and reddened. Creamy material can be squeezed out. | Inter-digital scent gland can become blocked. Gently squeeze to clear duct to surface and re-check later. |
| Lice | Many cases | Widespread | Sheep body lice was prevalent in some areas even after backlining last shearing with older insecticide families. | Suppressive 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. |
| Low body condition, nasal discharge, scour | 1 | Smallholder area | Sheep in half to full wool become recumbent, scour and may have terminal nasal discharge if underfed and if not treated for internal parasites. | Sheep owners need to be able to assess body condition score in woolly sheep and to feed and drench to maintain health of their animals. |
| Mis-mothering of newborn lambs | widespread | Northern and Southern Tasmania | Ewes in good condition at mating resulting in many multiple pregnancies, not scanned, lambed on less than ideal feed. | Scan ewes at 70 days, feed multiple-bearing ewes better feed, lamb down in smallest mobs possible with better feed and shelter for multiples. |
| Neurological (nervous system) signs in 1-2 week old lambs | Multiple cases | Southern and Northern Tasmania | Head thrown back, shaking, blind, down, depressed | Can be due to pestivirus (“hairy shaker”), copper deficiency, bacterial infection of brain. Best to have post mortems done and specific diagnosis made. |
| Scabby Mouth | Several cases | Northern Tasmania | Low prevalence in lambs at marking | Vaccinate lambs at marking. |
| Scrotal mange | 1 | Northern Tasmania | Usually seen in Merino rams but can affect other breeds. Unlikely to affect fertility unless more than 10 square centimetres of thickened skin/scabs on scrotum. Pasterns affected as well in severe cases. | The Chorioptes bovis mite lives on cattle and other species and survives for a number of days off the host so is hard to eradicate. Individually effected rams can be treated – see your vet. |
| Shelley toe | 1 report (but present in most flocks) | Southern Tasmania | Is a conformational fault, rarely causes lameness or production loss, only important because it can be confused with footrot. | Pare overlying hoof off if trimming hooves. Heritable and can be bred out of a flock. |
| Vaginal prolapse | Widespread | Northern and Southern Tasmania | Vaginal prolapse has been common, especially in multiple bearing ewes | Tail length to third joint, keep ewes on flatter ground in last few weeks of pregnancy, keep BCS 3 to 3.3. Don’t feed salt or swedes in last 1/3 of pregnancy. Have hay available if on low dry matter feed. Shear in last third of pregnancy. Maintain steady body weight from start of mating to scanning. |
| White muscle disease in lamb | 1 | Southern Tasmania | Lamb stiff with hard muscles. Whitish areas in main muscle groups would be seen if post mortem conducted. | Treat ewes with selenium in pre-lambing drench or vaccination, with intra-ruminal pellets every 3 years or add selenium to fertiliser every 2 years. Affected lambs can be given oral selenium and can recover with good nursing. |
| **OTHER SPECIES** | | | | |
| Anaemia in adult goat | 1 | Southern Tasmania | Goat with bottle jaw and anaemia, possibly Haemonchus (Barber’s pole worm) | Goats metabolise drenches faster than sheep, one of the most effective drenches is an off-label combination drench regime – see your vet for advice. |
| Corneal ulcer in neonatal kid | 1 | Northern Tasmania | Corneal ulceration in newborn goat kid | Eye ointment, protect from strong sunlight |
| Cryptosporidia in dairy calves | 1 | Northern Tasmania | Young calves develop scours in first 10 days of life | Keep calves warm and dry and pens clean. Keep calves hydrated with regular milk feeds, oral rehydration antibiotic cover to stop other secondary infections, can use specific crytosporidia prevention/treatment drug – see your vet. |
| Corynebacterium skin scabs in alpacas | 1 | Southern Tasmania | Alpacas have crusty 1 cm diameter scabs on skin that can be lifted to show raw area underneath. Most likely infection with same bacteria that cause cheesy gland (CLA) in sheep. | Good hygiene at shearing to stop cross-infection between individuals and other properties. Antibiotic treatment of affected alpacas. |
| Downer cows | 1 | Southern Tasmania | Beef cow recently exposed to bull. Paralysed hind limbs suspected fractured spine. Some cows went down late pregnancy -either grass tetany of pregnancy toxaemia. Other cows showed typical signs of grass tetany. | Euthanasia if spinal injury. Feed Causmag in hay or use boluses and feed well in late pregnancy if grass tetany/pregnancy toxaemia. |
| Liver fluke in cattle – feedback from abattoir | Multiple cases | Northern and Southern Tasmania | Live fluke detected in cattle slaughtered at abattoir | Strategic treatments in autumn and late winter with effective flukicides depending on challenge. Keep stock off areas where fluke snail survives (dam edges, lagoons, areas that flood in spring) if possible. Sheep run on same areas will also need treatment. |
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| Macrocyclic lactone resistance in Cooperia worms in young cattle | 1 | Northern Tasmania | Positive egg counts ( 100% Cooperia) within protection period claimed by drench manufacturer. | Use non-ML drench families, monitor egg counts, clinical signs and scouring in young cattle, grazing management: graze with alternative species, adult cattle, crop or cut hay to “clean” paddocks for young cattle. Select for resistant cattle (quite heritable). |
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| Photosensitisation with liver damage in cows | Multiple cases on one property | Northern Tasmania | Cows were on swedes and oat crop. | Remove from paddock, provide deep shade to protect from sunlight. Multivitamin injections, antibiotic cover if necessary. |
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| Stillbirths, every year in a cow | 1 | Southern Tasmania | Cow, loses calf every year | Typical history for Neospora, cows become permanently infected and abort/ have stillborn calf every year. Blood test and cull cow if positive. Limit dog contacts with cows. |