



Plains Talk is currently being emailed monthly to over 800 landholders.

It is also available to view online at <http://www.lhpa.org.au/districts/centralwest>

If you aren't on the mailing list and would like to be, please email me! jillian.kelly@lhpa.org.au

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Staff from the Central West LHPA, including Rangers and Vets have been assisting with the current Avian Influenza (bird flu) outbreak at Young and Cowra over the past couple of weeks. This work has included tracing chook, egg, feed and truck movements, manning gate posts on infected premises, contacting local chook owners and testing poultry flocks around the infected properties. It is likely that this assistance will continue over the coming weeks.



Drench Resistance is Here

- Dr Evelyn Walker, District Veterinarian, CWLHPA Dubbo

The Central West LHPA conducted drench resistance studies on several sheep properties throughout 2011 and 2012. These included surrounding areas of Dubbo, Gilgandra, Yeoval and Coonamble. Here we report our findings to date.

The predominant worm type across all farms was the Barber's Pole Worm. Barber's Pole Worm was found to be **RESISTANT to Albendazole (100% of farms); Ivermectin (100% of farms); Abamectin (100% of farms), and Moxidectin (50% of farms). This means Ivermectin or Abamectin when given alone do not work for treatment of Barber's Pole Worm. It's unfortunate that there is such widespread mectin resistance.**

However, we found that other drench classes were still effective against Barber's Pole Worm in our region only. These include Levamisole and Naphthalophos. This is an amazing finding since both of these drench classes have been around for a long time! Other areas of NSW are not so lucky! Individual farms will vary in individual drench effectiveness and you can check this by doing resistance testing.

So how do we tackle this drench resistance problem? To ensure drench longevity, we need to drench less and integrate regular Worm Testing (faecal egg counts and larval culture). This way you will know whether drenching is actually warranted based on egg counts and what worm types you have. Clean paddocks and grazing management are also very important. Treating with a knock down product is just as effective as a product with residual as long as the paddock is clean.

Since we know that Levamisole and Naphthalophos work on Barber's pole worm, it's very tempting to use them by themselves. However, using them by themselves will speed up drench resistance. So it's best to use them within combination products and in rotation. By using them in combination products, there is less selection pressure on the individual drench groups.

The Naphthalophos drench group is highly efficacious but due care should be exercised since it is an organophosphate. Commonly used organophosphate drenches include Rametin Combo and Combat Combo and the recently released NAPfix.

Since we have limited options when it comes to mectins, start using new drench classes now e.g. Zolvix (Monepantel) as well as organophosphate drenches as part of your drench rotation. Also avoid importing resistant worms by administering a quarantine drench to all introduced sheep.

And finally don't forget you can help fight worms by improving sheep immunity with nutrition. A sheep in good order has the ability to cope with worms much better than a stressed undernourished sheep. And, there's always going to be a few sheep in the mob with increased sensitivity to worms. These might be the underweight and daggy looking ones or those with consistently high egg counts. Cull these. Similarly, many studs are integrating worm resistance into their genetics. If you want to chat about all things "worms" or anything sheep related, feel free to give me a call or drop by in Dubbo.

Pasture Tour Turns Tropical

A recent tour of pastures in the Trangie district challenged more than 20 local producers to modify management on their properties according to NSW Department of Primary Industries (DPI) development officer, Trudie Atkinson.

“The Grassland Society of NSW Pasture Update showcased local properties where innovative management has lifted pasture quality and quantity, allowing producers to boost livestock production and farm sustainability,” Ms Atkinson said.

“The spring tour of ‘Dunniel’ drew positive responses from participants who were able to see how Peter and Fiona Howe have doubled their potential carrying capacity by sowing a third of the property to tropical perennial grasses.”

Ms Atkinson said the Howes made the decision to maintain conservative stocking rates, increasing the rate by just 30 per cent, as a buffer against seasonal variability.

“The Howes have pushed production by harvesting tropical grasses for hay which opens the pasture sward and encourages the germination and growth of valuable annual legumes,” she said.

Research at the Trangie Agricultural Research Centre highlighted the ability of tropical grass pastures to respond to summer rainfall and enhanced soil nutrition to significantly lift forage production for livestock.

Ms Atkinson said important ongoing research was evaluating temperate and tropical legumes which could be grown as companion crops to supply nitrogen to tropical grasses.

“More than just promoting grass growth, legumes supply high quality feed for stock and it’s that double benefit which has led Meat & Livestock Australia to fund our research through its Feedbase Investment Program.”

DPI Pasture Unit staff, Lester McCormick and Suzanne Boschma provided tips on successful pasture establishment; with advice on managing feed quality and the use of supplements to benefit livestock production presented by Central West Catchment Management Authority livestock officer, Brett Littler.

For more information on pasture management and future pasture updates which are due to run in Central West NSW during the next 12 months producers should contact Trudie Atkinson, (02) 6880 8041, trudie.atkinson@dpi.nsw.gov.au



Photo at Right: DPI Pasture Unit staff, Lester McCormick and Suzanne Boschma providing tips on successful perennial tropical pasture establishment and management during a tour of Peter and Fiona Howe's Property -Dunniel.

National Livestock Identification System: **STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION**

“HAVE YOUR SAY”

ABARES (Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences) invites input from stakeholders on alternative proposals for improving the National Livestock Identification System (NLIS) for sheep and goats, outlined in the consultation Regulatory Impact Statement (RIS). A full copy of the NLIS consultation RIS is available at www.daff.gov.au/nlis, or may be requested by telephone, mail or email.

Consultation period

This consultation RIS is subject to an eight-week consultation period, closing 5pm AEDT Friday, 6 December 2013.

Submissions

Submissions will be made publically available on the Department of Agriculture website; stakeholders should indicate if their submission is confidential and/or if sections contain confidential or sensitive information that is not for publication.

How will your feedback be used?

The NLIS consultation RIS was prepared at the request of the Standing Council on Primary Industries, made up of representatives from all states and territories along with the Australian Government. This consultation is taking place on behalf of all agricultural Ministers in the States and Territories and at the Federal level. Feedback and comments will help develop the decision Regulation Impact Statement for the Standing Council on Primary Industries to consider. **Your input will inform their decision on the future of the National Livestock Identification System for sheep and goats.**

Consultation scope

Feedback is sought on the identified options for improving the NLIS, the proposed method for economic analysis or on any other aspect of the document.

NLIS Options analysed in this paper

Three options for improving the current NLIS have been analysed in this consultation RIS:

- **Option 1:** Enhanced mob-based system—enhancement of the existing mob-based system with improvements in the verification and enforcement of business rules throughout the supply chain.
- **Option 2:** Electronic Identification (EID) system—the electronic tagging of animals with exemptions for sheep and goats sold directly from their property of birth to abattoirs or export depots.
- **Option 3:** EID system without exemptions.

The consultation RIS does not identify any preferred option for the National Livestock Identification System for implementation.

Contact and submission details

To submit feedback, find copies of the NLIS consultation RIS or request more information about this consultation, please:

Visit: daff.gov.au/nlis

Email: nlis.consultation@daff.gov.au

Write to: NLIS consultation

ABARES Adaptation and Biosecurity Branch

Department of Agriculture

GPO Box 1563, Canberra City ACT 2601, Australia

Phone: +61 2 6272 2454

Crown Rot Raises its Ugly Head

There are increasing reports of 'white heads' appearing in wheat crops throughout the region this year. These 'white heads' are most likely the result of Crown Rot.

Crown rot is a fungal infection that attacks the base (crown) of the cereal (Durum, wheat, barley and oats) plant disrupting water and nutrient supply to the developing head. This results in the droppy 'white head' appearance within the crop and most of these heads will contain no grain or very pinched grain at harvest. Water stress is the main reason for the visual expression of Crown Rot, so it is often seen first in paddocks along wheel tracks, surrounding trees and in paddocks with a high nitrogen content, where the crop has grown vigorously and then run out of moisture toward the end of the season.

It is important to note that Crown Rot can still be present in the crop even if the whiteheads are not visually obvious and yield losses can still occur in these crops. These crops may be identified by looking at the base of the wheat plant, where a brown discolouration of the stem base is a key identifying feature. There may also be pink/red fungal growth.

Unfortunately, crown rot has a very good survival method within the stems and crown of the cereal plant, as well as being hosted in common weeds such as barley grass, wild oats and phalaris. If crown rot is left unmanaged it will remain in dead and living material within the paddock from season to season.

A common misconception among farmers is that stubble burning or cereal stubble grazing are both effective control methods for Crown Rot. In fact burning stubble is not always reliable as burning only reduces the plant material on the soil surface and the crown rot fungus can still survive in the plants crown material beneath the soil surface.

Additionally, grazing of stubble, cultivation and mulching can result in fragmentation of the infected plant material into interrow spaces and may spread the infection across a larger area of the paddock.

The most reliable methods for reducing fungal levels and controlling Crown rot are;

- Crop rotation with crops such as legumes (field peas, chickpeas, faba beans), canola, sunflower or sorghum. Importantly, the denser the crop canopy the greater the breakdown of infected cereal residue.
- A lucerne pasture phase within a mixed farming enterprise is very effective in reducing and controlling Crown Rot as it allows at least a 2 year break from cereal host crops.
- Good farm hygiene- controlling all grass weeds, within paddocks as well as along fencelines & roads
- Interrow sowing between previous years cereal stubble can reduce re-infection by up to 50% as Crown Rot transmission to new plants is via physical contact with infected residues.

Additionally, you may reduce the impact of crown rot by;

- Planting wheat varieties with greater resistance to Crown rot and Root Lesion Nematodes, as recent research has linked the two together. So chose varieties such as Longreach Spitfire , EGA Wylie and Sunguard.
- Reducing the potential moisture stress of a crop through good fallow management, in-crop weed control, matching nitrogen levels to plant requirements and avoiding very high plant populations.

If you are seeing these symptoms in your crop and you would like more information please contact Neroli Brennan on 02 6880 8048 or 0428 692713

Some helpful links for more information;

- Root & Crown Diseases in Wheat & Barley in Northern NSW
http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0019/159031/root-crown-rot-diseases.pdf
- Crown Rot in Cereals Fact Sheet- Southern & Western Regions
<http://www.grdc.com.au/Resources/Factsheets/2009/05/Crown-Rot-in-Cereals-Fact-Sheet-Southern-Western-Regions>

LAME LAMBS OUT WEST

Post-mulesing arthritis is sweeping the western part of the state, with lameness seen in 4% of lambs in some flocks, which is 3-4 times the incidence rate of other years.

Producers are seeing lambs with lameness and hot swollen painful joints 7-14 days after mulesing, with some deaths occurring.

Private veterinarians as well as LHPA & DPI veterinarians are working hard to get a diagnosis in these cases, but so far blood testing and cultures of the joints of affected lambs have all been diagnostically unrewarding. Laboratory testing has so far ruled out bacterial causes of arthritis such as Chlamydia, Mycoplasma, Erysipelas, Fusobacterium necrophorum and Truiperella pyogenes.

Local mulesing contractors agree that this year is a particularly bad one for post mulesing arthritis and are recommending that producers don't mark and mules at the same time and not to mules any later than mid-August. They also recommend to mules lambs after they are weaned.

The seasonal conditions of early rain during winter, then warmer than average conditions with wind, dust and small black flies seem to be big factors in the high prevalence of disease this year.

While hygiene during marking and mulesing is always important, this does not seem to be the main predisposing issue this year, according to local mulesing contractors.

This problem is very similar to the well documented increase in post-mulesing arthritis seen in the late 1980s across Western NSW.

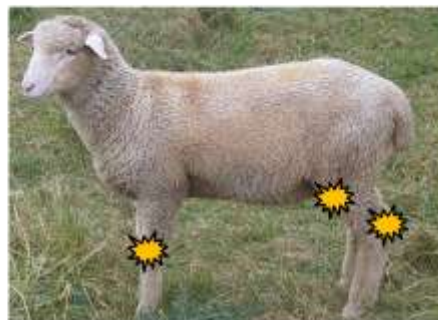
Any producer who experiences lameness in their lambs are urged to contact their preferred vet – the more cases we can see the more likely we are to get a firm diagnosis.

POST-MULESING ARTHRITIS IN LAMBS

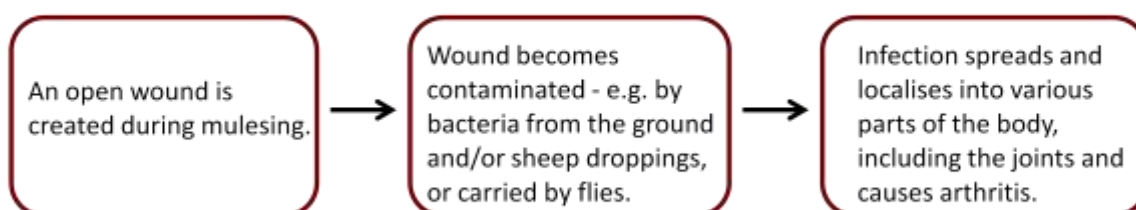
By: Ancella Jusuf, veterinary student intern at Dubbo LHPA

Some producers have reported seeing lambs with swollen joints (most commonly the knee, hock and stifle joints) and lameness after mulesing. The most common cause is an infectious arthritis.

There are several bacteria that could be responsible and diagnosis requires history-taking, physical examination and collection of blood and joint samples from the affected lamb.



How does the Problem Develop?



What are Some Risk Factors?

Anything that increases risk of wound infection, including:

- Wet, muddy, windy or dusty yard and weather conditions
- Being yarded for long time periods
- High fly burdens

How Do I Treat It?

The best method is prevention, as joint infections are often difficult to clear by the time they are noticed – they require a longer course and higher concentrations of antibiotics to be delivered into the infected joint.

What Can I Do to Prevent It?

Keeping mulesing wounds as clean as possible will reduce the chance of post-mulesing arthritis.

* These tips can be applied to reduce the risk of infection from other open marking wounds e.g. castration, tail docking.

1. **Avoid mulesing during unsuitable conditions (e.g. wet, windy, dusty, lots of flies) - no later than mid-August.**
2. **Avoid marking and mulesing at the same time.**
3. **Mules lambs after they are weaned.**
4. Avoid yarding sheep overnight to minimise contamination of yards with dung and urine.
5. Tip mulesed lambs onto ground that is most clear of dung and urine.
6. Release lambs from yards as soon as possible.
7. Put mulesed lambs into paddocks with the best chance for wound healing – e.g. lots of ground cover, and not wet, muddy or dusty.
8. If lambs are scouring, try to identify and address the cause – e.g. by drenching, changing feed, contacting your local DV to help with diagnosis.
9. Inspect lambs after mulesing to identify any problems early on.

Please contact your local DV for advice on any other animal health issues.



Local Land Services news - chairs announced for Central West and Central Tablelands

Local Land Services have announced the Chairs for Central West (Tom Gavel) and Central Tablelands LLS (Ian Armstrong). [Read more about Tom and Ian...](#)

Latest news and natural resource management success stories

Read about the latest news, events and real life stories behind natural resource management in our [spring 2013 catchment newsletter...](#)

Fruit Fly warning network on trial in Orange district

Warmer winter weather coupled with the chance of summer hail and thunderstorms has prompted the Central West Catchment Management Authority (CMA) to trial an early warning network for the Queensland fruit fly.

The trial will [take place in the Orange district this spring and summer](#) to build awareness of risks Queensland fruit fly present to commercial orchards and backyard fruit trees.

Central West CMA Round 11 Incentives still available

Fish River rehabilitation – This project will help private landholders within the Fish River catchment to protect and rehabilitate targeted riparian areas and remnant woodlands. Under the project, landholders will receive financial and technical support to implement a range of activities which rehabilitate and improve riparian lands, revegetate native vegetation or protect remnant woodlands for conservation purposes.

Farm planning assistance – We are providing all landholders, land managers and rural employees the opportunity to develop a farm management plan for any property located within the Central West Catchment. Understanding the strengths and weaknesses of your property and its resources is vital to ensure business and property sustainability in an ever changing environment. Having a certified farm plan is also a requirement for all Central West CMA funding incentives.

Pest animal support in lower Macquarie floodplain region

The Central West CMA and Central West Livestock Health and Pest Authority can help landholders in target regions manage problem pests. [Read on to find out more...](#)

Incentives available till dollars are spent, projects assessed and funded as they are received. Visit our website to see what Incentives we have available

[Catchment Management Authority - Central West CMA Incentives](#)

2014 Science and Innovation Awards Closes 8 November. If you're 18-35, this is your chance to apply for up to \$22,000 to fund your project on an innovative or emerging scientific issue to benefit Australia's primary industries. For more info: <http://www.daff.gov.au/abares/conferences-events/scienceawards>

WomDomNom: 4 Day Paddle, Wellington to Narromine. 28 Nov - 1 Dec. "WomDomNom" is a organised four day paddle starting from Wellington. It is designed to be recreational paddle, with an emphasis to encourage paddling on the Macquarie River. It is a fully supported paddle, with your camping equipment transported between camping spots. All meals and soft drinks are provided over the 4 days, and you will be on the water for roughly 6 hours per day. Why "WomDomNom"? It stands for Wellington on Macquarie (Wom), Dubbo on Macquarie (Dom), Narromine on Macquarie (Nom)! The paddle costs \$50 per day, and if you do 3 days, we'll throw in the 4th for free! For more info on how to participate: <http://www.womdomnom.com/>

Contributors for this month:

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