

# Tablelands landholder newsletter

## Pest animal control - now and into the future

by Mark McGaw, Senior Ranger

Some pest animal populations have increased due to the better seasonal conditions being encountered in the last two years, in particular feral pigs and rabbits.

Both of these species require high protein diets to breed. This protein can be found in green grass, which has been in good supply for a while now. The availability of green grass can also have an effect on control programs.

Trapping and baiting programs for feral pigs and rabbits rely on the animal eating the food put out for them. When animals are hungry the effectiveness of these programs is enhanced.

As well as utilising proven methods of control such as baiting, trapping and harbour destruction, there are some new control measures being trialled at present. They include:

- A toxin that is specific to pigs, different bait types for pig control, and a bait station for delivering the baits.
- A new toxin being trialled for foxes,

and hopefully new delivery systems such as the M44 ejector which could be registered for use on private land.

- The development of a LTD (lethal trap device) and a new toxin for wild dog control.
- Continuing research into different strains of Rabbit Hemorrhagic Disease (RHD) in rabbits.
- Additional control methods for controlling feral cats and wild deer populations.

Pest animals cause a lot of damage to the environment and domesticated livestock in Australia. It's great to see that money is being spent to look at new control options which will assist in the control of these destructive animals.

However, all of this is in the future, so we all still need to be controlling pests to ensure they don't increase populations further and move into new areas.

Your local Tablelands LHPA office can assist you to control pest animals on your property by carrying out property inspections, providing advice and coordinating control programs.

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Please contact your local LHPA office if you wish to register for the next 1080/Pindone short course.

### REMINDER: Property to property transfers

People who move livestock from one PIC to another must update the NLIS database which is managed by MLA. Please contact your LHPA office if you require further information.



Feral pigs being free-fed prior to baiting



## Sheep weaner management

By Jim McDonald,  
District Veterinarian, Yass office

In most sheep flocks, merino weaner sheep play a key role in maintaining flock structure and improving farm productivity through genetic gain.

Target weaner survival rates of greater than 95% from weaning through until hogget age should be achievable in most flocks in most years - the higher the rate, the higher your returns.

Several years ago Meat and Livestock Australia (MLA) assessed that weaner loss ranked third, behind worms and blowfly, in the overall impact of disease in flocks. Control of both flies and worms in the management of weaners and their ability to thrive are all very closely interrelated.

Survival rates are not the only issue in weaner management; ewe weaners must have sufficient growth for a successful first joining (18 months for merino, seven to 12 months for crossbreds) and wool staple strength needs to be managed to maximise wool clip income.

Follow the checklist below for successful weaner management:

**Target weights for merino weaners:** (Dec - 23 kg; Mar - 25 kg; June - 27 kg; Sep - 28 kg). Weaners with weights at or above the 'target weight' at weaning (14 weeks) have a three to four fold improvement in survival. Monitor weights every six weeks.

**Nutrition (feed quality and quantity):** Adequate protein, energy and minerals are required for growth. A lack of these through summer and autumn dramatically affects weaners. Supplementation through this time should be considered normal practice. Lupins are the feed of choice, but lucerne hay or cereal grain with added limestone will produce good results. Lambs benefit from being trained with ewe. If this is not possible, start feeding early to allow lambs to become accustomed to the feed well before it is really necessary. Don't forget selenium - if in doubt, please ask.

**Internal parasites:** Major alert for this summer/autumn! Don't underestimate the impact of worms. Keep egg counts below 120 to 150 epg. Worm egg count every three weeks or drench every five to six weeks with an effective drench. If using capsules or long acting drenches, get advice on options available and the ramifications regarding worm

drench resistance. Drench test or at least do a drench check test to know effectiveness of the drench you are using. It is also critical to know the worm type, so a larval differential will help target your worm control. Select products with a suitable withholding period.

**Blowfly strike:** Wetter summers will bring plenty of flies. Use the best available product for your situation, taking into account wool with-holding period.

**Clostridia infections:** A robust vaccination program needs to be followed to reduce potential losses. Vaccinate at marking, weaning and then again in autumn to get you through the winter. Choices are 5-in-1, 6-in-1, or 8-in-1.

**Grass seeds:** Weaners affected by grass seeds develop poorly, which can lead to secondary infections and problems if heavy rain or dipping occurs. Weaner paddocks should be short with minimal seed. If not, then shearing will be necessary, but leave dipping for six weeks after shearing to avoid issues.

**Weather:** Good shade is required through summer and adequate shelter through winter especially within four weeks of post-shearing.

## Pest animal control: worth the cost

By Mark McGaw, Senior Ranger

Pest animals can have a huge impact on farming enterprises through lost production, competition with livestock and land degradation. However, pest animal control in Australia can be very cost effective, if done correctly.

Feral pigs, foxes, rabbits and wild dogs all have the potential of causing damage to your property and livestock. Foxes and wild dogs will predate on livestock on your property and on adjoining land. It is not uncommon for a single fox to kill two to five lambs a night, or for a wild dog to kill or maim up to 40 animals a night. If you add up the initial costs of these livestock and the loss of future income from these attacks, the resulting costs can quickly add up.

On the other hand, rabbits and feral pigs can cause direct and indirect costs. They will compete with your livestock for food and water and cause severe land degradation. Ten rabbits will eat as much as one sheep and will scratch the ground in search for additional fibre.

Feral pigs will graze on pastures and dig up the ground in search of grubs and plant bulbs. These activities not only have an impact on your production but they also allow weeds to establish and increase the potential for erosion.

In short, if you have any of these animals on your property they will be costing you money. Pest animal control should be carried out to reduce populations and increase your profits.

Effective pest animal control will pay for itself many times over, and if done in a group control program with your neighbours, the pest animals can be controlled over larger areas and not only enhance the effectiveness of the control program, but reduce the chances of the re-population.

Your local Tablelands LHPA ranger can advise you on the best control options for your property and the ideal time to carry out control work.

## Message from the Chairman

John Seaman,  
Chairman Tablelands LHPA

While we await the Review recommendation from Terry Ryan to NSW Minister for Primary Industries, Katrina Hodgkinson, it is business as usual for the Authority's staff and Directors.

Lynette Safranek was appointed acting General Manager in late November, and she will hold this position for at least five months. We thank Bruce Watt and Mark McGaw for covering the acting General Manager role. We also thank Colin Somerset, Scott Schlunke and Neville Collins for acting as Senior Ranger, and Bill Johnson for acting as Senior District Veterinarian. Courtney Pass will take up the role as acting Office

Coordinator for the next few months. Landholders are enjoying a good season and stable markets for grain, wool and livestock, and we all appreciate the conditions.

Our staff were involved in workshops and field days during spring, and the Board of Directors appreciate their efforts.

Several prominent sheep breeders from North of Bathurst have suggested that Tablelands convene some workshops to demonstrate the services that our pest animal Rangers have to offer. In particular, they would like to see the setting up of wild dog and fox control groups. This has been taken on board and is currently being developed.

LHPA staff and directors are certainly

keen to assist our landholders, but there must be landholder support. Please contact any of the Tablelands LHPA offices to start the ball rolling.

Our Board of Directors wish every ratepayer a prosperous 2012.

## Community consultation

The Tablelands LHPA Board of Directors meet on the last Wednesday of each month and invite community members and groups to meet with them on the Tuesday afternoon before each meeting. You can confirm the dates and meeting locations by contacting any of our offices. If you are interested in participating please contact your local LHPA office.

## The challenge of parasite control in cattle

By Bruce Watt, Senior District Veterinarian

While internal parasites are a much more important problem in sheep than in cattle, we have some advantages in our quest to control parasites in sheep versus cattle.

More research has been conducted on sheep parasites and we now have a wider range of anthelmintics available for use in sheep.

In addition, sheep parasites die off on pastures in a predictable fashion and this is rapid in hot dry weather. In cattle, worms emerge from dung pats and become available on pastures for over 12 months. Graziers running cattle-only properties face a challenge preparing 'worm free' pastures for young cattle.

While anthelmintic resistance is a major problem in sheep on the tablelands, our limited studies indicate that may not yet be a significant problem for cattle producers on the NSW Central Tablelands. However, veterinarian David Rendell has identified a high proportion of properties in western Victoria with resistance to Ivermectin.

I can't explain the difference between



our results and his under similar grazing regimes but it does indicate that we should look further to determine more accurately the extent of anthelmintic resistance in cattle here.

Parasite control in young cattle is also hampered because the tools available to monitor parasite levels (faecal worm egg counts and pepsinogen levels) are of limited sensitivity. In our study, worm egg counts, while slightly higher in the regularly drenched young cattle compared to less frequently drenched cattle, nonetheless remained low.

Without an effective means of monitoring gastrointestinal parasite levels in young cattle, I think that

producers and their advisers are restricted to recommending prescriptive parasite control programs.

I therefore recommend young cattle should be drenched at weaning and then run on pastures that have had limited exposure to parasites previously - easier said than done however, as mentioned previously.

They should then be drenched in mid-winter (assuming an autumn weaning) and again in spring. Heifers should also be drenched pre-calving.

We generally consider that older cattle have immunity to worms and should only be drenched under adverse conditions.

## FAQs

Why am I being charged rates by Tablelands LHPA?

The Rural Lands Protection Act 1998 requires your local Livestock Health and Pest Authority (LHPA) to charge rates on all parcels of land deemed to be rateable under the Act. Each Authority's district has a minimum rating area for properties - 10 hectares for the Tablelands LHPA.

How are rates calculated?

Rates are charged on a two-tier basis, involving a general rate (base charge) paid by all landholders and a supplementary animal health rate. The base charge is similar to a 'flag fall' in a taxi. It is a uniform charge on all rateable land. General rate = base charge + cents per stock unit (based on notional carrying capacity). Animal health rate = base charge + cents per stock unit (based on notional carrying capacity and if you indicated on your land and stock return that you had at least 50 stock units on

your property as at 30 June in the previous year). It is also payable if the annual return is not lodged by the due date.

What if I have difficulty paying?

If you are having difficulties paying your account by the due date, please contact our Office Coordinator to see if you qualify for a payment plan.

What are the rates for?

Tablelands LHPA delivers a frontline livestock health service to safeguard livestock industries in NSW from disease threats, as well as working with landholders to minimize the impact of pests on agricultural production.

We use the income generated by rates to provide the regulatory, advisory and programmed livestock health and pest animal assistance that benefits all landholders in the region.

## Contacting Us

**Bathurst (district main office)**  
66 Corporation Ave, BATHURST NSW 2795  
Ph 02 6331 1377

**Goulburn**  
181 Bourke St, GOULBURN NSW 2580  
Ph 02 4821 2522

**Molong**  
36 Bank St, MOLONG NSW 2866  
Ph 02 6366 8505

**Yass**  
13 Mitchell St, YASS NSW 2582  
Ph 02 6226 1155

**Email Enquiries**  
admin.tablelands@lhpa.org.au

## UNDERSTANDING YOUR RATES NOTICE

The **general rate** consists of a base charge and an amount payable on the notional carrying capacity of your property\*. This funds pest animal programs, TSR management and local administration and service delivery.

The **animal health rate** consists of a base charge and an amount payable on your notional carrying capacity\*. This funds locally delivered livestock health programs and is payable if you told us on your annual land and stock return that you had at least 50 stock units on your property OR if you did not return your land and stock form by the due date.

The **pest insect special purpose rate** is collected for NSW DPI to cover the cost of plague locust control campaigns. LHPAs do not retain these funds. The pest insect rate includes a flat contribution per rate notice, plus a cents per stock units amount.

The **meat industry levy** is collected for the NSW Food Authority. LHPAs do not retain these funds.

The **Stock Movement Permit** is issued for routine movements of stock between two holdings occupied by the permit holder.

RURAL LANDS PROTECTION ACT 1998 Section 63



### 2012 RATE NOTICE

TAX INVOICE ABN 12XXXXX

Livestock Health and Pest Authority  
Guns Gully Rd, GUNS GULLY, NSW

JOHN CITIZEN  
PO BOX XXXX  
GUNS GULLY NSW XXXX

Reference No: 12XXXXX  
Date of Issue: 27 January 2012  
Payment Due Date: 29 February 2012

Holding Name: J Citizen  
Holding Address: Guns Gully  
Associated Holdings: N/A

Area of Land (hectares): 61.75 Notional Carrying Capacity: 546 Notional Intensive Carrying Capacity: 546

Particulars of Rates and Charges		Units	Cents per Unit
RATES - GENERAL	BASE CHARGE \$65.14+	546	19.900
RATES - ANIMAL HEALTH	BASE CHARGE \$28.50+	546	12.540
SPECIAL PURPOSE RATE			
- PEST INSECTS	BASE CHARGE \$16.00+	546	3.666
MEAT INDUSTRY LEVY	BASE CHARGE \$ 5.00+	546	0.600
STOCK MOVEMENT PERMIT RENEWAL	\$22.00		

All rates and charges are exempt from GST under Division 81 of the Goods and Services Tax Act 1999 unless otherwise indicated.

The Meat Industry Levy is a statutory levy collected on behalf of the NSW Food Authority. The Pest Insect Special Purpose Rate is collected for NSW DPI to cover the cost of plague locust control campaigns.

*NOTE: The rates and charges amounts shown left are indicative only. Actual amounts will vary according to where you live.*

\*The **notional carrying capacity** is an estimate, worked out by the local authority, of the number of stock a property would normally carry in an average year if used solely for livestock purposes and is based on stock units per hectare.

The **base charge** is a uniform charge within an authority, similar to a 'flag fall' in a taxi.