

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

The Review of the Livestock Health and Pest Authorities across NSW by economist Terry Ryan and the subsequent report by him to the Minister is still in motion, however it is business as usual for Directors and Staff of all LHPAs.

The New England LHPA has been for some time without a Senior Ranger. We now welcome Mark Tarrant who has been recently appointed to this role and he commenced duties on November 14th. Mark and family are from interstate but have a family network in the Glen Innes area and he has opted to work from that Office.

Directors of the Authority regularly attend and participate in a range of working groups and committees to ensure the issues facing New England producers is well heard. Recently Director Bill O'Halloran has been asked to take up a representative role for LHPA in the Sheep & Goat NLIS Advisory Committee.

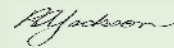
In August the Board of Directors had the opportunity to hear from ratepayers in the Tenterfield area who came and discussed some feedback and provided suggestions. The Directors were very impressed with the range of information made available at this community engagement meeting and are proposing future meetings in 2012 at Walcha in February, Bonshaw in March and Uralla area in April.

Once venues and dates have been set we will be seeking interested ratepayers to attend and participate in these meetings. If you have an interest in the meantime please advise by emailing admin.new.english@lhpa.org.au

Planning for the 2012 Aerial Baiting Program for wild dog control is now underway. The LHPA operates this program largely alone, and takes all the risks and responsibility. The Department of Primary Industry's role is to approve the application of aerial baits within the Pesticide Control Order. Given the OH&S requirements to train volunteers to be virtual employees, and for LHPAs to protect these volunteers, means times are changing for programs such as this and the Authority is taking steps to make the program safe, effective and compliant with legislation. The other side of the coin is that protection of the livestock industry is essential, and costs must equate with benefits.

On that note I wish you all a safe and happy New Year and that good seasons be with you.

Yours Sincerely



Robyn Jackson
Chairman

DID YOU KNOW REPORTING SIGHTINGS OF WILD DOGS IS AS IMPORTANT AS REPORTING WILD DOG PREDATION AND STOCK LOSSES?



Increased wild dog sightings are occurring. This is due to the good season and availability of native animals. The Authority asks landholders to report any sightings, tracks and any evidence that wild dogs are in the area. Predation and stock losses don't have to have occurred – we are interested in hearing about sightings because this helps us in planning the wild dog control programs that benefit your area.

Rangers can be contacted on their mobiles or at each of the three offices.

Alternatively you can email reports or advice to us on admin.new.english@lhpa.org.au.

December 2011

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2012 Aerial Baiting Program

NSW Primary Industries
2012 Tamworth Courses



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IF YOU WANT MORE SHEEP - TAKE CARE OF YOUR WEANERS

Jim Meckiff,

NSW DPI Livestock Officer - Sheep and Wool, Armidale

Weaning merino lambs will need special attention this year. Spring pastures are powering ahead, feed is abundant - but will it have the quality for weaners to do well?

Wean merino weaners 14 weeks from the start of lambing. Ensure live weights of 18 - 20 kg at weaning and maintain a growth rate of 1 kg per month over summer/ autumn will greatly improve weaner survival and future value.

Vaccination, blowfly protection and drenching will be necessary at weaning time along with regular Worm Egg Count (WEC) monitoring over summer.

Weaning paddocks should have been selected 3 months prior to weaning, at lambing. Preventing pasture contamination with sheep worms can be achieved several ways: spelling, grazing with cattle or "smart grazing" with adult sheep for no more than 3 weeks after an effective drench.

A weaner paddock is definitely NOT the lambing paddock!

With the pasture mass at weaning expected to be excessive, keeping it short and green could prove difficult. Aim for a low worm pasture of 1500-2500 kg green DM/ha and highly digestible 70%. Putting weaners out into tall, rank green feed with low digestibility will lead to inadequate growth rates and compromise weaner survival and profitability of your enterprise.

Grain feeding would be the last thing on a graziers mind but the next drought is a day closer every day.

Grain training or imprinting lambs with ewes will make feeding in the future much easier.

Supplementing will only be necessary if suitable paddock feed is not available to achieve target weights.

To achieve weaner growth targets, regular monitoring is required, so use your scales and check the progress. WEC monitoring will help keep you ahead of internal parasitic worms.

For more information on weaning merino lambs contact a NSW DPI Sheep and Wool Officer.

Chris Shands – Glen Innes, phone 02 67301 928

Jim Meckiff – Armidale, phone 02 67 388 505



FOOTROT: IT'S STILL OUT THERE, THOUGH IT IS RARE TO FIND

The annual footrot survey has started. Please continue to support the surveys when approached.

- Producers should report lame sheep to your District Vets and Rangers, we are happy to check them out and this should put your mind at rest or at worst minimise the impact through early detection.
- Buyers should inspect sheep/goats for footrot and lice before purchase. Be prepared to walk away if you are not happy with what's on offer.
- Check the footrot information as well as the OJD scores on the National Sheep Health Statement and be sure to get a copy after purchase.
- Isolate introduced stock on arrival on property and check them thoroughly for footrot and lice as soon as possible, again early detection will reduce the impact.



The past 12 months have provided ideal conditions for the progression and spread of virulent footrot. It is only through vigilance at all levels that we will maintain or further reduce the current low levels of infection.

On farm biosecurity should be on your mind at all times.

THE HIDDEN COST OF BLOAT BOMBS

The best clover season in years has seen wide spread cattle deaths due to bloat, and some in big numbers. Those producers that fared the best tended to have a balance of clover and established grasses.

There was also widespread use of bloat capsules ('bombs') and these also were effective although not always 100%. When faced with such a big clover season the temptation is to put bloat capsules in younger, underweight cattle.

There is a reason you shouldn't put bloat capsules in cattle under 200kg. The capsule can become stuck in the oesophagus and not pass down into the rumen. This usually occurs at the thoracic inlet where the oesophagus enters into the chest and the bone restricts the expansion of the oesophagus. These cattle are unable to swallow food, and so waste away and die. Photos below show a weaner which died after being treated with a capsule and the capsule stuck at the thoracic inlet.



We have undertaken a number of cattle death investigations over the past couple of months and have found stuck bloat capsules in underweight cattle, so be careful if using bloat bombs.

GRANITE BORDERS LANDCARE COMMITTEE

invites you to the following events:

Feral Animal Control Field Days

TENTERFIELD - Tenterfield Showground (Wool Pavilion)

21st January 2012 9.30am — 2.30pm RSVP: 18th January 2012

DEEPWATER - 'Yarramundi' New England Highway (Brian Lanz' property)

10th February 2012 9.30am — 2.30pm RSVP: 6th February 2012

Wild Dog Strategic Planning Workshops

DRAKE

7th February 2012 10.00am — 2.30pm NSW time RSVP: 3rd February 2012

STEINBROOK HALL

8th February 2012 10.00am — 1:00pm NSW time RSVP: 6th February 2012

BOLIVIA HALL

20th February 2012 9.00am — 12.30pm NSW time RSVP: 16th February 2012

DEEPWATER COMMERCIAL HOTEL

1st March 2012 8:30am — 12.30pm RSVP: 27th February 2012

RSVP and further information contact

Amanda Craig, Granite Borders Landcare Office (02) 6736 3500.

FUNDED BY AUSTRALIAN WOOL INNOVATION LIMITED

Greg Mifsud (National Wild Dog Facilitator and part of the Invasive Animal Cooperative Research Centre) has been engaged to assist in developing a nil tenure strategy for wild dog control. LHPA Rangers will also be in attendance at these days.



THREE DAY SICKNESS AND PINKEYE VACCINATIONS - NOW IS THE TIME TO ACT

As well as the normal list of vaccinations which are recommended for use in routine cattle management such as the Clostridial vaccines 5 in 1, and 7 in 1 (with added Leptospirosis), Vibrio and Pestivirus vaccines, all of which should have been done prior to joining or marking and in the case of 5 in 1 repeated to assist in reducing Pulpary Kidney losses due to the great clover and bloat season many areas are currently experiencing. There are 2 other commercially available vaccines which should be given now if you are going to use them to allow sufficient immunity to develop prior to challenge.

These are Three day Sickness Vaccine (BEF or Ephemeral Fever) which is available as a 2 part frozen vaccine from your local vets, and also Piligard (Pinkeye) vaccine - a thick white chilled vaccine - available from your vet or produce store.

Pinkeye is spread by flies and the vaccination is effective against many but not all strains of the disease. However it does have to be given well in advance – say 4 weeks - of the pinkeye season to allow some immunity to develop. Of course it doesn't help with preventing grass seeds infections but it may end up cheaper than treating large numbers of cattle for pinkeye or incurring weight losses from blinded stock.

Similarly Three Day Sickness may not be an issue for some, but can affect heavily conditioned, fat or pregnant cattle and may cause temporary or permanent infertility if bulls are affected. It is recommended for high value stock. Initially 2 doses of vaccine are required but after that only an annual booster. Again introduced or high value stock can benefit from this vaccine. It can be very effective but it does need to be given early enough to allow immunity to develop.

If you are considering using either of these vaccines get in early and make sure your stock are protected – don't wait until Pinkeye or 3 Day Sickness is in the area - you will be disappointed.

BUFFALO FLY ALERT!

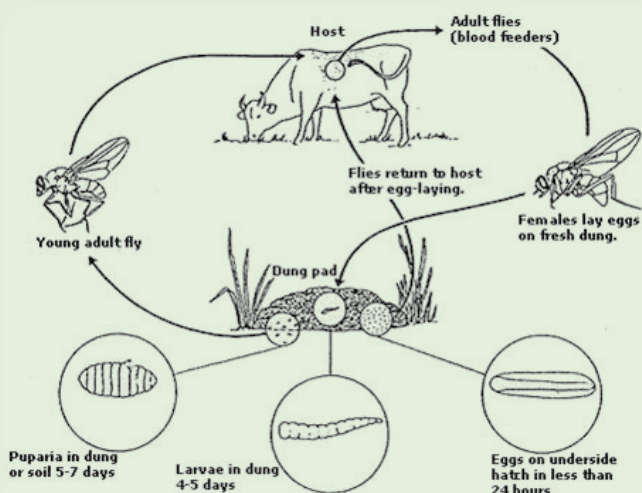
Cattle producers should be on the lookout for buffalo fly this summer. The fly is easily identified and looks like a small F1-11 jet.

Normally found in warmer climates the buffalo fly tends to move from the coast onto the Tablelands in summer. Previously of nuisance value we have been seeing increasing numbers over the past few years. When there are large numbers about, cattle can develop sores around their eyes and weight loss may also occur. Allergic cattle can develop severe itching which causes damage to their hides. Black cattle often attract the highest numbers of flies.

Treatment:

Where fly numbers are low (less than 200 per beast) and cattle are not significantly bothered, we are advising that any treatment is delayed for as long as possible. Insecticidal ear tags are recommended for the peak fly period from January to May. As with all chemical treatments rotation of effective chemicals is encouraged to try to slow resistance. For example use Organophosphate tags for 2 years and then Pyrethroid tags the third year.

If fly numbers are high prior to late January, then a spray or pour on treatment may be applied. Again the type of insecticide should be rotated to reduce resistance development.



Typical fighter jet wings of the buffalo fly

(Source: North Coast LHPA)

For more information please contact the Livestock Health Staff at your local LHPA office or download the fact sheet on NSW DPI website at:

http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_

<file/0017/110915/buffalo-flies-and-their-control.pdf>

EMERGENCY ANIMAL DISEASE PREPAREDNESS

Dealing with emergency or exotic disease is an important part of our role as your livestock health team. During 2011 our rangers and district vets have continued to improve their skills with training days and workshops. We have also been involved in the Hendra virus response on the North Coast of NSW.

Knowing how to correctly put on and take off personnel protective equipment and undertake decontamination procedures is fundamental to the safety of staff and not spreading disease.

Recently district vets, Steve Eastwood and Andrew Biddle spent a number of weeks on the North Coast as part of the Incident Management Team managing the Hendra virus response. This put into practice the skills learned in training and provides us with confidence that in the event of an exotic disease outbreak in livestock our Authority has staff with the skills to get on with the job.



Rangers receiving instruction from Senior District Veterinarian Steve Eastwood



Staff in full protective equipment defining an exclusion area between horses during the recent Hendra response

Although our LHPA staff are well trained the most critical factor in finding an emergency disease are farmers. You see your stock more often than anyone else and know what is normal. If you see unusual health signs or behaviour in your stock contact your LHPA vet or veterinary practitioner.

CANCER EYE CATTLE - YOU MUST ACT

Producers have animal welfare responsibilities to take action if your animal develops Squamous Cell Carcinoma or Cancer Eye. These are painful conditions and you should take steps to either treat (in the early stages) or euthanase the animal. Most cases except for very early are not fit for transport or sale for slaughter. If in doubt get a vet to look at the animal but if you are asking the question, you probably already know the answer, and the animal should be destroyed on farm.

There is absolutely no defence if you decide to keep a cancer eye cow alive just because it has now calved and you want to rear the calf and get something for it.

Any producers that have suspect stock should either contact the LHPA for advice or destroy the animal. Many such affected cattle would make suitable meat baits for 1080 wild dog control baiting so you may have get some use from the animal and it would be relieved of the pain involved.

Consider using alternative genetics that provides pigmentation or hooding or shading of the eye to reduce the incidence of the disease in a herd but check for the disease in your herd and cull those with suspect eyes before they progress.

SHEEP LICE REVIEW

Recently NSW DPI undertook a review into the role of government in managing sheep lice infestations.

A report on the responses can be found at:
<http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/agriculture/livestock/sheep/health/sheep-lice-review>



MOST ARE DRENCHING BLIND

by
Arthur Le Feuvre

Reprinted with permission - Australian Farm Journal, September 2011 Page, 21.

Recently a question was asked of researchers in regard to sustainable worm management. The question was: 'What percentage of producers in your region has any factual evidence of the drench resistance status of their property before they buy a drench?'

In other words, do producers have any factual knowledge of which drenches actually are effective on their properties? The good news is that it was thought Australian producers had the highest (10-15%). Other sheep producing countries ranged from 1-5%. But the other way of looking at this is that 85-90% of Australian sheep producers have no idea if the drench they purchase will be effective (other than their visual observations and 'gut feeling').

If we compared the sheep flock on a property to an expensive piece of machinery, I'd bet that the machinery has its oil and water checked a lot more often than the sheep flock is checked for worms- and I'd bet that the oil used is the correct type too. The cost of a 5000 km grease and oil change on the property 4WD is \$200-300- about the same as a couple of worm egg counts (WEC) with a larval differentiation: one WEC before drenching and one WEC 10 days later to make sure the drench was effective.

When you think about the cost of drenching without even taking a labour component into account, drench testing and knowing what drenches work on your animals makes good dollars and sense.

NOTIFIABLE ANIMAL DISEASES

Notifiable diseases

Some diseases are of such concern that you are legally required to report sightings or suspicions to a LHPA or DPI Inspector. A full list of notifiable diseases can be found online at: <http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/agriculture/livestock/health/general/notifiable-animal-diseases-nsw>.

Notifiable diseases may be Exotic, Endemic or Emerging Diseases that may have adverse impacts on animals, people or the agricultural industry and economy.

Exotic diseases

Exotic pests and diseases are those which are not present in Australia, or those which are present but not established and are under an official containment and/or eradication program.

Emerging diseases

Emerging pests and diseases are those which are present in NSW but their presence is being monitored.

Endemic diseases

Endemic diseases are present in NSW or particular areas of NSW. They may be managed by accreditation, control or eradication programs.

By remaining vigilant and notifying if you know or suspect you have an animal disease of concern you play an important role in protecting our industry and preventing disease spread. You can contact the LHPA or DPI at your local office or on the Animal Disease Emergency Hotline on 1800 675 888. This national service operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

WILD DOGS

As we move into summer the wild dog pups are now generally weaned and as they mature they will start to leave their current home range. It is important that landholders report any sightings and / or predation to their local LHPA Ranger. Rangers will be able to assist you in developing a control program.

For those who are not currently a member of a Wild Dog Control Association we can connect you with the respective association so you can be a part of the landscape control approach.

For those that have smaller blocks where baiting is not possible, it is still important that you contribute to your local associations by helping out on meat cutup days or as a local contact as the control works that are carried out by the larger landholders is helping to protect your stock.

In the Tenterfield area we are having predation of sheep and lambs within 4km of the edge of town. Every landholder has a legal responsibility to continuously suppress and control wild dogs. The best way of achieving this is to become an active member of your local Wild Dog Association.



OVINE JOHNES DISEASE: IS COMPLACENCY OUR BIGGEST THREAT?



Our local sheep industry is strong and relatively disease free. Part of that is due to the success of our OJD exclusion area. This special sheep biosecurity area is seen as a success nationwide. So much so that other states are now attempting to set up similar regional biosecurity areas.

So what are the challenges we face in the future? Probably our biggest hurdle is the complacency we currently have due to the success we have enjoyed over the past few years.

If you would like a reminder of why we are still trying to keep the disease out, have a look at the photo. On the left is a four year old ewe with OJD and on the right is a healthy seven year old ewe.

So if you want to avoid seeing this on your farm anytime soon, please buy carefully and always ask to see the National Sheep Health Statement (NSHS) **BEFORE** you buy the sheep. If selling please **PROVIDE** a NSHS (you are required to by law).

Photo courtesy: Animal Health Australia

2012 AERIAL BAITING PROGRAM

Recently the Authority has been considering the future planning for the aerial baiting program which is conducted annually in the district. This program is run with the much appreciated contribution of 21 Wild Dog Control Associations (WDCA) in the New England.

As many WDCA members know, the NSW Department of Primary Industries was heavily involved in the delivery and coordination of this important program previously. This has changed in recent years and the LHPA now operates this program largely alone. This means the responsibility and risks associated with the program now rests with the LHPA.

The Authority has been alerted to some risks and new requirements around air safety audits and insurance costs. These issues are threatening to make aerial baiting too costly for landholders and the LHPA to continue. Changes to OH&S legislation that are due to commence in 2012 are adding to the problem by increasing the compliance requirements for the LHPA and Wild Dog Associations. These new OH&S requirements make onerous demands on volunteers to be trained and act as if they were employees; this means extra costs for the LHPA and a real liability risk for any potential volunteers.

The Authority is seeking ways to ensure the valuable livestock industries and landholders are protected from wild dog attacks without incurring unsustainable cost increases or unacceptable risks to members. The Authority is currently negotiating to ensure that aircraft will be affordable for future wild dog

campaigns by developing efficiency strategies to reduce costs within the program to ensure sustainability.

These include

- Providing freezers for meat bait collection in the district
- Providing an opportunity for use of manufactured baits where dog associations wish to trial those baits
- Investigating the potential to increase ground baiting programs.

The Authority is also making preparations for an additional spring ground baiting campaign should that be necessary, as well as working with other agencies such as National Parks and State Forests to negotiate for their increased participation where necessary.

The Authority is committed to working with landholders, Wild Dog Associations and other agencies to ensure the continuation of wild dog control programs. Livestock industries form the backbone of economic activity in New England, and the Authority is committed to assisting producers in accessing a program that protects livestock industries across the New England region.

The Authority is confident that wild dog control program can continue on an effective & sustainable footing where landholders, LHPA and government agencies work together to overcome current and future challenges.

MONTH	DAY	COURSE	LOCATION
February	15-16	Off-Road Four Wheel Drive Training	Armidale
February	20-21	Chainsaw - Trim & Cut Felled Trees	Grafton
February	22-23	Chainsaw - Trim & Cut Felled Trees	Grafton
February	24	Pole Saw	Grafton
March	1	Fencing Conventional	Tamworth
March	6 - 7	Safe Tractor Operation	Tamworth
March	8 - 9	Safe Tractor Operation	Glen Innes
March	10 - 11	Beginning In Bees	Tamworth
March	14 - 15	Off-Road Four Wheel Drive Training	Tamworth
March	20	Quad Bike Handling (1 long day)	Tamworth
March	21 - 22	Quad Bike Handling (1.5 days)	Tamworth
March	20 - 21	SMARTtrain AQF3 Chemical Application - Initial	Wollongbar
March	20	SMARTtrain AQF3 Chemical Application - Reaccreditation	Wollongbar
March	22-23	SMARTtrain AQF4 Chemical Risk Mgt - Initial (1.5 days)	Wollongbar
March	22	SMARTtrain AQF4 Chemical Risk Mgt - Reaccreditation	Wollongbar
March	26 - 27	Chainsaw - Trim & Cut Felled Trees	Glen Innes/Mt Mitchell
March	28 - 29	Chainsaw - Fall Trees Manually	Mt.Mitchell
March	28	Faecal Egg Count For Worms	Tamworth
March	30	Pole Saw	Glen Innes
April	23 - 24	Chainsaw - Trim & Cut Felled Trees	Grafton/Mt Mitchell
April	26 - 27	Chainsaw - Trim & Cut Felled Trees	Grafton/Mt Mitchell
April	28 - 29	Working Dogs (Weekend)	Grafton
March	28 - 29	Working Dogs (Weekend)	Walgett
May	2 - 3	Stock Safe - Safe Responsible Livestock Handling	Wollongbar
May	9 - 10	Safe Tractor Operation	Narrabri
May	16 - 17	Off-Road Four Wheel Drive Training	Armidale
May	23 - 24	Photography for Field Work	Tamworth
May	28 - 29	Chainsaw - Trim & Cut Felled Trees	Glen Innes/Mt Mitchell
May	30 - 31	Chainsaw - Fall Trees Manually	Mt Mitchell
June	5 - 6	SMARTtrain AQF3 Chemical Application - Initial	Tamworth
June	5	SMARTtrain AQF3 Chemical Application - Reaccreditation	Tamworth
June	7 - 8	SMARTtrain AQF4 Chemical Risk Mgt - Initial (1.5 days)	Tamworth
June	7	SMARTtrain AQF4 Chemical Risk Mgt - Reaccreditation	Tamworth
June	13 - 14	Off-Road Four Wheel Drive Training	Bingara
June	20 - 21	Safe Tractor Operation	Grafton
June	20	Farmer's Guide to Managing Climate Risk	Tamworth
June	21	Farmer's Guide to Managing Climate Risk	Narrabri
June	27	Faecal Egg Count For Worms	Tamworth
June	26 - 27	Chainsaw - Trim & Cut Felled Trees	Gunnedah
June	28 - 29	Chainsaw - Fall Trees Manually	Boggabri
June	25 - 26	Chainsaw - Trim & Cut Felled Trees	Grafton/Mt Mitchell
June	27 - 28	Chainsaw - Trim & Cut Felled Trees	Grafton/Mt Mitchell
June	29	Pole Saw	Grafton

***Please Note: Course dates/locations may change due to demand.
Ring Cassie (6763 1276) or Julie (6763 1285) for more information.***