

National OJD Management Plan 2013-2018

This document outlines the new OJD Management Plan 2013-2018 . The plan has been prepared by WoolProducers Australia and the Sheepmeat Council of Australia to assist industry in managing Ovine Johnes Disease and preventing its spread,

Background

Ovine Johnes's disease (OJD) has become endemic in some sheep production areas of Australia but in other areas the disease is not known to exist or exists at a very low level.

SCA and WPA conducted a review in the National OJD Management Plan 2007-12 and embarked on a thorough consultation process throughout 2011-13 to evaluate the plan and make a decision on future national management arrangements.

The review identified that some regions of Australia have been effective in delaying the spread of the disease between flocks and / or in reducing within flock prevalence. However, in other regions, the plan had failed to meet the objective of minimising the risk to properties and areas that appeared to be disease-free, as OJD has continued to spread into a number of previously low prevalence areas. This meant that some change was necessary. It was not appropriate for the current plan to continue.

Through an extensive process a revised plan has been developed for implementation on 1 July 2013. This has been a collaborative effort. For more details on the consultation process, feedback from industry and the rationale used when making these policy decisions, please visit the website, www.ojd.com.au.

National OJD Management Plan 2013-18

Objectives

The objectives of the OJD Management Plan 2013-18 are:

1. Minimise the risk of infection by *Mycobacterium paratuberculosis* (*Mptb*) OJD spreading to properties and regions that currently appear disease free
2. Reduce the financial impact and adverse animal health and welfare effects of the disease on individual flocks, and on the sheep industry as a whole.

Funding

Under the plan, funding will be provided for:

1. Extension/communication activities to provide producers with information about biosecurity and management of OJD.
2. Developing and refining risk assessment tools, such as the national Sheep Health Statement (SHS) to assist producers make informed decisions when trading sheep.
3. Developing an effective abattoir program as a tool for monitoring individual flock OJD control programs and for use as an assurance tool in low-risk flocks. Abattoir monitoring for OJD will become a part of the broader endemic disease monitoring and feedback system.
4. Ongoing research and development to help producers minimise the impact of OJD on their businesses.
5. Contributing to the cross-species National Johne's Disease Control Plan, including SheepMAP

Vaccination and a regional biosecurity approach will not be provided with financial support by the OJD Management Plan 2013-18.

Vaccination

The plan encourages the use of vaccination as it is the only tool available to reduce the clinical expression of the disease and for significantly reducing the level of shedding by infected sheep.

Sheep Health Statement

The SHS will be a series of 'yes' / 'no' questions. It will form the risk assessment tool to provide producers with the relevant information to make sound trading decisions. The onus will be on producers to request a completed SHS when purchasing sheep. It will provide information on the consignment and the flock of origin for the other major endemic sheep conditions, for producers to determine if the consignment presents an acceptable level of risk to their own enterprise.

Zoning

There will be no nationally recognised zones or areas in relation to OJD prevalence under the OJD Management Plan 2013-18.

Biosecurity Plans

Producers will be encouraged to develop property and regional biosecurity plans (RBPs), but this is not mandatory under the OJDMP 2013-18 therefore there will be no national mechanism for approving RBPs.

RBPs will outline how groups of producers will be able to detect, control and manage endemic diseases with the aim of minimising the spread of endemic conditions, including OJD. Further, by actively managing disease risk, producers will need to negotiate trading opportunities with those states and regions with biosecurity plans in place.

Non-financial support will be provided for groups of producers who wish to implement RBPs.

Additional Information

Like previous plans producers will need to manage their own risk and tools will be provided for this, including SHS, RBP guidelines and business rules and advice.

The SHS, as well as guidelines and templates for those producers who want to develop and RBP, are available at www.ojd.com.au.