



RIVERINA LOCAL
LIVESTOCK UPDATE

September



Local Land
Services

Case study: Winter Worm-ageddon!

By Elizabeth Ferguson, Team Leader Animal Biosecurity & Welfare

🔍 Sheep

CASE HISTORY:

A producer contacted their local district veterinarian reporting a number of losses in a mob of 12 month old Dorper maiden ewes that had started lambing earlier that month. In the mob of 85 ewes, 10 ewes had died since lambing began and close to 40 lambs had also died within 24 hours of birth. The ewes displayed signs of weakness and scouring before death. The ewes had been treated with Avomec® Duel Broad Spectrum Drench for Sheep and a 5-in-1 vaccination in January.

The mob was running in a mixed pasture with good growth and ground cover. Mineral blocks had been available for the previous two weeks and hay was also supplied. Other mobs of maiden ewes, also lambing, which were running in other paddocks did not have any signs of illness or deaths.

A worm egg count was conducted at a local rural store and found the average count to be 546 eggs per gram.

Upon examination, a number of ewes had evidence of scours. One ewe was recumbent but quickly moved away when approached, with no neurological signs being seen.

A post mortem on one ewe was conducted which had died several hours prior to the visit. The post mortem found that the ewe had a BCS of 2 and had evidence of marked scours, with a large amount of watery faecal matter seen in its colon, caecum and ileum. No blood was present in the scours. The faeces had a faecal consistency score of 3.5 (that is, it was very watery). There was evidence of marked enteritis, with much of the intestinal tract appearing red and inflamed. Examination of the caecum revealed small (approx. 5mm length) white worms, most likely whip worms.

No other abnormalities were detected.

A faecal sample was submitted for a worm egg count and was found to be 440 epg. However, when multiplied by the faecal consistency score, the corrected worm egg count was 1540.

Unfortunately there were no lambs available to post mortem.

DIAGNOSIS:

Given the high worm egg count and the gross appearance of the intestines, a diagnosis of endoparasitism was determined to be the most likely cause of death in these ewes.

However, the cause of death of the lambs was still not determined. The owner immediately drenched the ewes with Startect® as a primer and Cydectin® LA, due to the lack of an available "safe" paddock for the ewes and lambs to be moved.

The owner reported that two more ewes died soon after drenching, but since then no additional losses have occurred.



*Black Scour Worm (Trichostrongylus spp).
From www.wormboss.com.au*

It is important to remember that worm eggs will be diluted in scours. A faecal consistency score should be estimated when collecting faecal samples, and the count should be multiplied by the score to give a more accurate indication of the actual WEC.

In this case, the lack of a pre-lambing drench, and the ideal weather conditions meant that the young ewes were at high risk of worm burdens.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

This season we have seen very high WEC results in properties around the Riverina, with one vet describing this winter as “Worm-ageddon”. In this particular case, the ewes, being only 12 months old, were highly susceptible to worm burdens. This is because they were not only still developing immunity to worms due to their age, but coupled with the pressure of lambing, would have been highly vulnerable to worms. Leading up to and during lambing, ewes experience a “peri-parturient” drop in immunity.

This means that any worms within the ewe are not going to be suppressed by the ewe’s immune system, and will survive to lay large numbers of eggs, meaning both the ewes and lambs are exposed to high number of worm larvae on the pasture. Scour worms (*Trichostrongylus* spp.) can cause disease and deaths in the cooler months.

WHAT CAN BE DONE TO PREVENT?

There are some general recommendations to control worms, particularly leading up to lambing and weaning.

Firstly, paddock preparation is the key. Make sure you plan ahead to prepare safe lambing and weaning paddocks. Spelling paddocks to reduce larval contamination should take place over summer, so now is the time to allocate paddocks for next year’s lambing and weaning.

Make sure you regularly conduct WECs on your most vulnerable mobs, including weaners and pregnant ewes. WECs should be conducted every 4-6 weeks over the winter months. This can ensure you drench when required and will also ensure you don’t waste time and money drenching when you may not need to. Make sure you also do a WEC 10-14 days after drenching to check that the drench worked.

Strategic drenching should be used to minimise the number of reactive (or tactical) drenches required. An effective summer drench will help to clear any worms from your sheep and reduce larval contamination over summer, when scour worms are less likely to survive. Just make sure you keep an eye out for barber’s pole worm in the warmer months!

Drenching at pre-lambing and weaning will also help to protect the more vulnerable classes of stock.

Don’t “save” the triple or four-way combination drenches and newer classes of drench (monepantel, derquantel) for when the single or dual-actives no longer work. Research tells us that the best time to use combinations and new classes is before worm resistance to the single and dual actives emerges. Use them early and rotate your combinations!

Use short-acting drenches, where possible. If possible, drench and move stock onto a safe paddock. If there are no safe paddocks available, during the winter months a longer acting drench (with a short-acting primer and tail-cutter drench used when WECs start to increase) will be the most effective treatment. Don’t use long-acting treatments on safe or clean paddocks, as this will increase the rate of resistance emerging in those worms!

Quarantine drench any introduced sheep with a highly effective drench. Hold new stock for a few days in a quarantine paddock so any eggs pass before moving them onto any other paddocks.

And lastly, know which drenches work!!!! It is important to do a drench resistance test (FECRT) on your flock every two years, so that you know which actives will work. For more information on how to conduct a drench resistance test, please give your local district veterinarian a call.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

<http://www.wormboss.com.au>

Sheep producers across the Riverina - Are you interested in being involved in a sheep drench test survey this spring? Please email elizabeth.ferguson@lrs.nsw.gov.au by 30th September for more information.

Case study: Planning ahead - Summer fly prevention

By Dione Howard, District Vet

🔍 Sheep

The wet end to summer earlier this year may have set the Riverina's crops up for another bumper harvest, but was a stark reminder of the havoc flies can play in our sheep flocks. Flystrike (cutaneous myiasis) is a significant cause of mortality and lost productivity in sheep. The metallic green/bronze Australian sheep blowfly (*Lucilia cuprina*) causes over 90% of all flystrike.

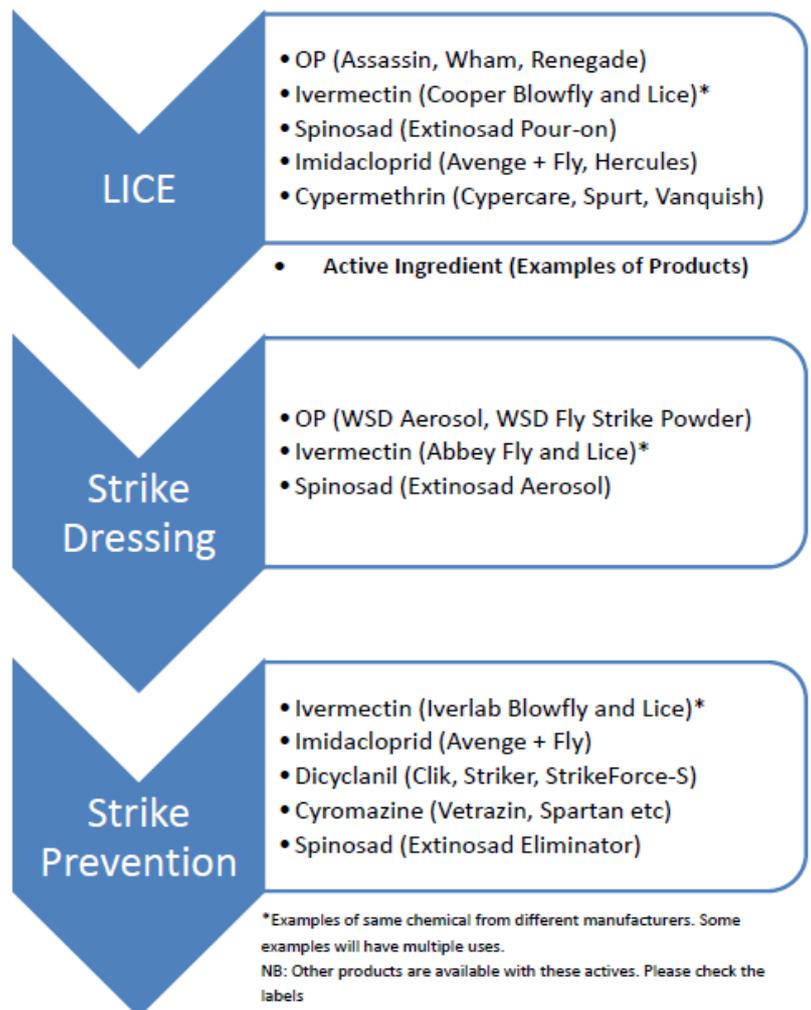
Coming up to another fly season, now is a great time to be thinking about flystrike prevention. Maggots that dropped into the soil in autumn have been waiting in pre-pupa stage and will pupate over the next few weeks of spring as the soil warms. If this over-wintering population of flies encounters susceptible sheep and the conditions are suitable for flystrike, there will be a flywave. Flies deposit their eggs in the warm, moist fleece of sheep and the hatched maggots abrade the skin, causing a severe dermatitis ('strike'). Left untreated, the strike leads to a septicaemia which can kill sheep within days.

So what can we do? Controlling the risk of flystrike leads to better health and welfare outcomes for sheep.

Follow these principles and use the Decision Tree and chemical group tables when selecting chemicals for prevention:

- 1) Use a **different chemical group for lice control** than for blowfly treatment or prevention.
- 2) Use a **different chemical group for dressing strikes** than for strike prevention. It is important to monitor sheep closely during high-risk fly periods, and treat struck sheep quickly.
- 3) If there are going to be **two treatments** for flystrike prevention in a season or growing year – **ROTATE**.
- 4) Try to **minimise** the use of chemicals.
- 5) As flies are particularly attracted to sheep with dags, aim to minimise dags by ensuring good worm control and controlling nutritional scours. Use strategic **drenching, crutching, and shearing** to provide protection which will also minimise the use of chemicals (Also consider drenches in the rotation of chemicals where possible – read the first case study in this newsletter for more info).
- 6) If there is **resistance** on your property, you will still get some protection, but the period will be decreased and by using that chemical you may be selecting for more resistance.
- 7) Any preventative strategy (whether it be shearing or chemical application) should be undertaken before the soil temperatures increase and the first fly wave appears. This will help to ensure fly populations remain low for the season.

Chemical Selection – Pick 1 Chemical Group per Treatment without Doubling-up.



Chemical Group	Abbreviation	Active Ingredients of Products
Organophosphates	OP's	Diazinon, Chlorfenvinphos, Temephos
Macrocyclic Lactones	ML's	Ivermectin Abamectin
Neonicotinoids	Nicotins	Imidacloprid, Thiacloprid
Insect Growth Regulators	IGR's	Cyromazine, Dicyclanil, Diflubenzuron, Triflumuron
Spinosyn	-	Spinosad
Synthetic Pyrethroid	SP's	Cypermethrin, alpha-Cypermethrin

Blowfly Strike Preventatives

Chemicals by Group	Application	Protection up to	Resistance to
Ivermectin	Jetting / Dip	12 weeks	No
Spinosad	Jetting / Dip	4-6 weeks	No
Imidacloprid	Spray-on	14 weeks	No
Dicyclanil	Spray-on	11-29 weeks	Yes
Cyromazine	Spray-on / Jetting	11-14 weeks	Yes
Cypermethrin (Vanquish)	Spray-on	10 weeks	No

In the long term the best solution is to breed sheep that are less susceptible to flystrike. Looking to buy rams this spring? Select sires with low wrinkle, low dag and low breech cover ASBVs, and consider prioritising the same traits in your ewe flock.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

[Sheep blowflies \(nsw.gov.au\)](http://nsw.gov.au)

[Breeding to Reduce FlyStrike Susceptibility \(flyboss.com.au\)](http://flyboss.com.au)

For more information about using the chemical selection Decision Tree, please contact your district vet.

Thank you to Narelle Sales (NSW DPI) and Justine McNally (North West LLS).

Announcements and additional warnings

Q & A WITH OUR NEW VETERINARIAN AT GUNDAGAI – AMY UNDERWOOD

Where are you from?

Coreen, NSW

What's your favourite part about livestock vet work?

Working with farmers to improve the health, welfare and productivity of their livestock. Having grown up on a property I know how important the health and welfare of their animals is to farmers.

Why did you become an Local Land Services District Vet?

I have always loved agriculture and livestock. I think being a DV is a great way to combine my veterinary skills with my passion for agriculture and livestock.

What are you most looking forward to about working in the Gundagai area?

Gundagai is such a beautiful area, I can't wait to get out onto farms, meet the locals and fix some animals!

What do you do outside of work?

I spend a lot of my spare time helping out on my families sheep property or my partners beef property. I can also be found training or racing in triathlons or rowing at home on the Murray River.



REMINDER FROM INTEGRITY SYSTEMS COMPANY ABOUT THE NEED TO RECORD MOVEMENTS OF LIVESTOCK BETWEEN PROPERTIES WITH DIFFERENT PICS

It's not just a requirement of the NLIS Regulation; it's an LPA requirement as well.

One owner, two properties: what are your responsibilities?

If you move livestock between two properties you own with different PICS (for example, the livestock are transported by vehicle from one property to the other), this movement must be recorded in the NLIS database. You will also need to complete a Livestock Production Assurance (LPA) NVD.

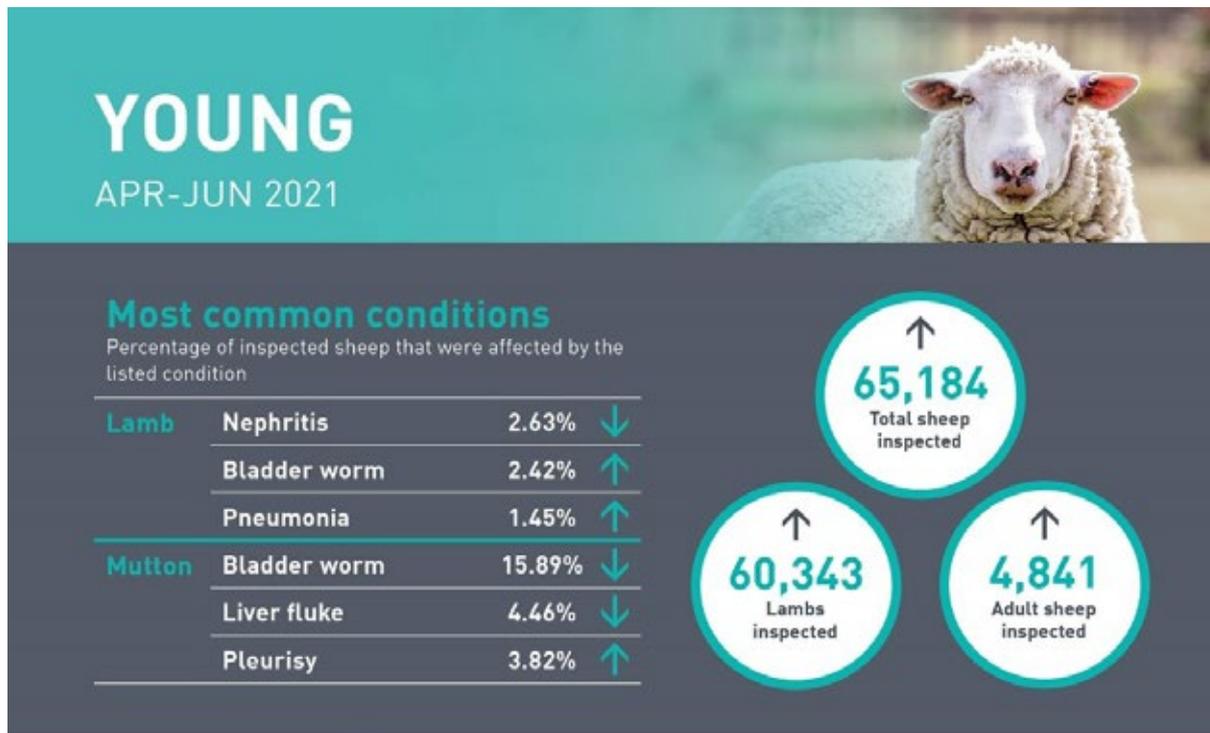
When completing an LPA NVD to transport livestock between two properties that you own, you must ensure that the consigned to and destination sections of the NVD are completed correctly.

Remember - LPA program auditors check the identification devices (e.g. ear tags) that have been issued to a PIC and the movements that have been recorded onto and off the PIC when completing an LPA audit.

Failure to complete NLIS transfers could be recorded as a non-conformance by the auditor and may lead to the suspension of a producer's LPA accreditation, removing access to LPA National Vendor Declarations (NVDs).

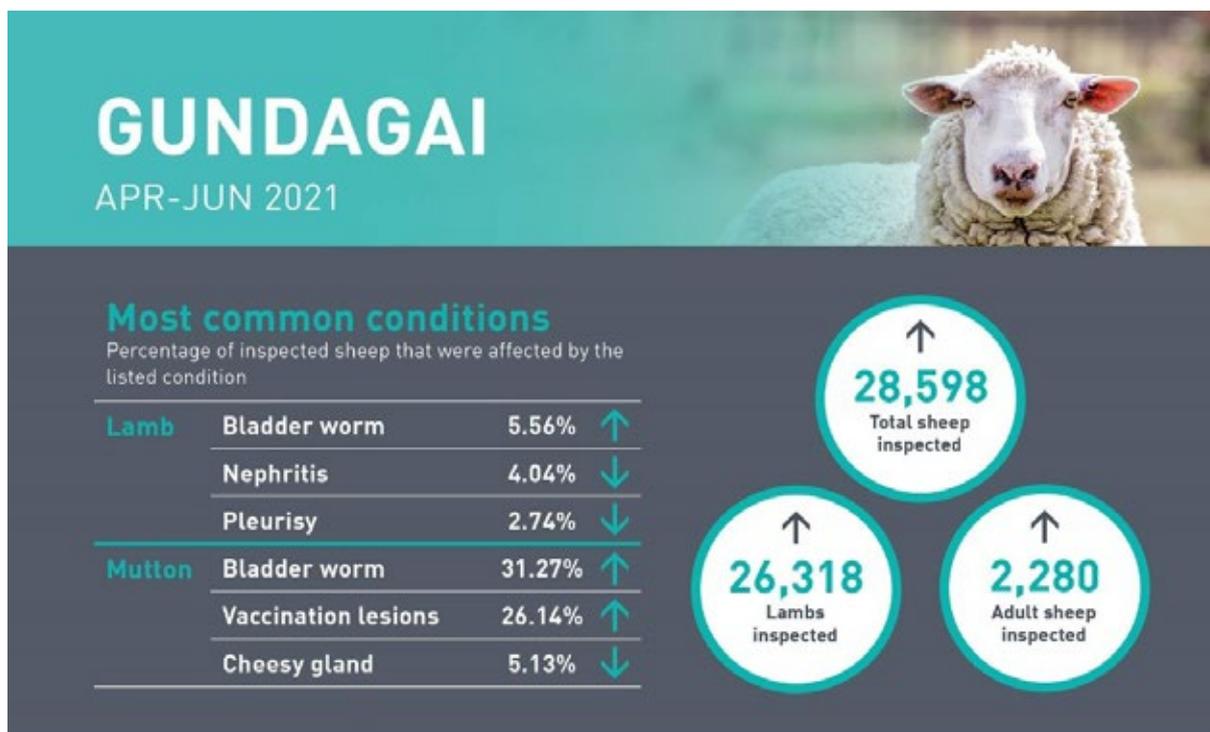
NATIONAL SHEEP HEALTH MONITORING PROJECT – QUARTER 2 MONITORING REPORT APRIL – JUNE 2021

The NSHMP commenced in 2007 to monitor lines of sheep in abattoirs for animal health conditions that reduce farm profit through productivity losses or increase meat processing wastage. For more information about the NSHMP visit [NSHMP-Annual-Report_2019-20-1.pdf](#) (animalhealthaustralia.com.au)



Data are from sheep transferred directly from property to abattoir i.e. not through saleyards. Trend arrows show how the numbers compare to the same time period of the previous year.

For more information on these conditions visit: www.animalhealthaustralia.com.au/nshmp



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WAGGA WAGGA

APR-JUN 2021



Most common conditions

Percentage of inspected sheep that were affected by the listed condition

Lamb	Nephritis	6.86%	↓
	Bladder worm	5.60%	↓
	Pleurisy	2.51%	↓
Mutton	Nephritis	7.14%	↓
	Bladder worm	6.49%	↓
	Pleurisy	3.85%	↓

↑
38,860
Total sheep inspected

↓
32,239
Lambs inspected

↑
6,621
Adult sheep inspected

Data are from sheep transferred directly from property to abattoir i.e. not through saleyards. Trend arrows show how the numbers compare to the same time period of the previous year. For more information on these conditions visit: www.animalhealthaustralia.com.au/nshmp



NARRANDERA

APR-JUN 2021



Most common conditions

Percentage of inspected sheep that were affected by the listed condition

Lamb	Nephritis	8.59%	↓
	Bladder worm	1.84%	↓
	Grass seed lesions	1.25%	↑
Mutton	Nephritis	5.11%	↓
	Bladder worm	2.28%	↓
	Pleurisy	2.05%	↑

↑
12,284
Total sheep inspected

↑
8,373
Lambs inspected

↑
3,911
Adult sheep inspected

Data are from sheep transferred directly from property to abattoir i.e. not through saleyards. Trend arrows show how the numbers compare to the same time period of the previous year. For more information on these conditions visit: www.animalhealthaustralia.com.au/nshmp



HAY

APR-JUN 2021



Most common conditions

Percentage of inspected sheep that were affected by the listed condition

Lamb	Nephritis	2.42%	↑
	Bladder worm	1.62%	↑
	Pleurisy	0.89%	↑
Mutton	Cheesy gland	7.93%	↑
	Pleurisy	2.48%	↑
	Arthritis	1.43%	↑



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Trend arrows show how the numbers compare to the same time period of the previous year.
For more information on these conditions visit: www.animalhealthaustralia.com.au/nshmp



DAIRY CALVES SURVEY – HAVE YOUR SAY

Charles Sturt University is currently completing a research project that aims to understand the knowledge, attitudes and practices of primary producers regarding bobby calves in Australian dairy systems. This survey will also assess dairy producer wellbeing and core beliefs surrounding euthanasia of non-replacement male calves.

If you are a dairy owner or manager please feel free to complete the online survey below.

The questionnaire will take approximately 15 minutes. Please find the survey here https://www.research.net/r/Male_Dairy_Calves

It is recommended to be complete on a computer or tablet and not on a phone due to some question formatting.

Participants will have the opportunity to **receive a \$20 gift card** that will be distributed to participants following the questionnaire process as a symbol of appreciation for the participant's time and efforts.

Participation in this study is completely voluntary and there is no penalty for refusing to take part. This project has been approved by the Charles Sturt University Ethics Committee. All information gathered will be treated confidentially and no identifying information regarding you or your organisation will appear in any publications from this study.

PIG BIOSECURITY

The single biggest threat to the pork industry's sustainability is an outbreak of an emergency animal disease. All pig owners and producers need to remain vigilant and report any unusual signs of disease or death to their veterinarian or government agency.

A new biosecurity management planning toolkit is now available on the Farm Biosecurity website for pig owners and producers: <https://www.farmbiosecurity.com.au/pig-biosecurity-management-resources/>

Resources are available for all levels of pig keeping and production, whether you have one or two pet pigs, a farm stay operation, hobby farm, keep pigs for your own consumption or are a small or large commercial operation and may be quality assured (APIQ accredited).

NEW

PIG BIOSECURITY MANAGEMENT PLANNING TOOLKIT

farmbiosecurity

NSW GOVERNMENT | AUSTRALIAN PORK | Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment | SunPork Farms | Charles Sturt University

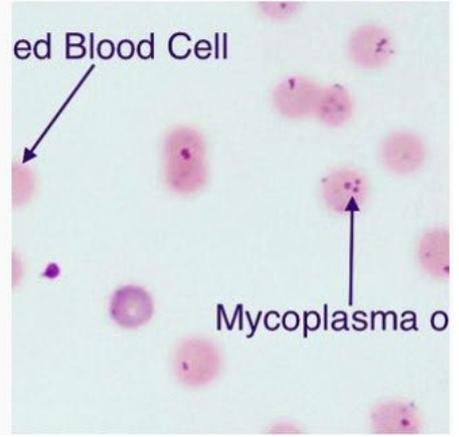
Upcoming events

MLA PRODUCTIVITY & PROFITABILITY WEBINAR SERIES

Register for upcoming webinars and watch recordings of previous topics here [Productivity and Profitability webinars | Meat & Livestock Australia \(mla.com.au\)](#)

- 22nd September - Improving success rates for a synchronised AI program - Shane Thompson
- 6th October: Flock rebuilding strategies - Forbes Brian
- 20th October: MLA Carbon Neutral 2030 program - Margaret Jewell

Follow us at [@locallivestockvets](https://www.instagram.com/locallivestockvets) on Instagram to see photos and videos direct from the paddock!



CONTACT YOUR CLOSEST DISTRICT VETERINARIAN

WAGGA

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Dione Howard - 0428 115 134 or 6923 6300

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Georgia Grimmond - 0427 418 006

HAY

Georgia Grimmond - 0427 418 006

GUNDAGAI

Amy Underwood - 6940 6900

YOUNG

Rhys Powell - 0427 147 939