

Owning Livestock Starter Pack

SHEEP & GOATS



**Thinking of buying livestock and
unsure where to begin? Stock Sense
have created this booklet with some
key resources and information on
how to get prepared.**

Stock Sense is funded by the Cattle Compensation Fund
and the Sheep and Goat Compensation Fund and is proudly
delivered by Victorian Farmers Federation.

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STOCK SENSE

Stock Sense is proudly run and delivered by the Victorian Farmers Federation (VFF). The project is funded by both the Cattle Compensation Fund and the Sheep and Goat Compensation Fund.

Stock Sense was established to help Victorian livestock producers maintain and improve animal health and welfare and Victoria's overall biosecurity status.

Stock Sense achieves this through several actions including:

- Educational workshops
- Webinars
- Development of fact sheets
- Distribution of related industry material through social media and e-newsletters
- Other activities as required

Stock Sense engages with livestock owners across Victoria as well as those new to owning livestock, providing relevant information on owning and managing livestock. The Stock Sense team has created this guide to owning sheep and goats with the aim of helping new landowners looking to purchase livestock, understand their responsibilities whilst offering guidance to help keep their animals happy and healthy.

This guide outlines the key responsibilities when owning livestock in Victoria; with a guide to walk you through what's required at the different stages of buying, owning, and selling livestock.

Connect with us on social media for more information on events and workshops:

CONTACT US

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NEW LIVESTOCK OWNERS

If you have just purchased a property or are considering purchasing livestock without much experience in raising them, we have some great tips on how to keep them happy and healthy.

Whether you are planning to raise animals as a business or just want a few around the property for the farm experience, it is important to remember animals need to receive appropriate care.

The Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines outline the minimum national standard for care and management of livestock regarding feed, water, appropriate handling, and management of animals.

As a livestock owner there are certain legal responsibilities that you must be aware of to protect you and your animals. In Victoria, these responsibilities are laid out as laws, codes, regulations, and industry quality assurance programs. By following the information in this booklet, you will contribute to protecting your livestock, your neighbour's livestock and the community.

Property Identification Codes (PIC)

Before purchasing livestock, you will need to register for a Property Identification Code. A PIC is the eight-character alphanumeric code allocated by the department to a property with its purpose being for tracing livestock movements and controlling disease outbreaks. PIC's may also be used for locating properties and contacting owners in the case of an emergency.

Your PIC is used in relation to the National Livestock Identification Scheme (NLIS) to monitor the movement and health of livestock to ensure that disease and health risks are being avoided. All livestock owners are required to register their animals and PIC with the NLIS to ensure they comply with the NLIS.

Victorian PICs begin with the numeral 3, followed by four letters and three more numerals, for example, 3ABCD123. The first two letters identify the municipality of the property.

A single PIC can be allocated to a property consisting of more than one block of land, provided the blocks are part of the one enterprise and are within the same locality.

Applying for a PIC

You can apply for a PIC through the Agriculture Victoria website and can also update your existing PIC details.

To apply for a Property Identification Code scan the QR code or visit: pic.agriculture.vic.gov.au



National Livestock Identification System (NLIS)

The NLIS is Australia's system for the identification and traceability of cattle, sheep and goats. The NLIS combines three elements to enable the lifetime traceability of animals:

1. An electronic ear tag
2. A PIC for identification of physical location
3. An online database to store and correlate the data.

The NLIS ensures that lifetime movements of cattle, sheep, and goats can be identified and recorded within Australia to ensure a high standard of traceability and biosecurity.

Traceability Requirements

NLIS tags are mandatory for sheep and goats.

There are two types of NLIS (Sheep and Goat) tags available:

1. **NLIS (Sheep and goat) breeder tags are colour coded** to match the sheep industries 'year of birth' tag colour system and are used to permanently identify livestock before they leave their property of birth.
2. **NLIS (Sheep and goat) post-breeder tags are pink** and are used to permanently identify introduced livestock not already identified with an electronic tag, or that have lost their original tag.

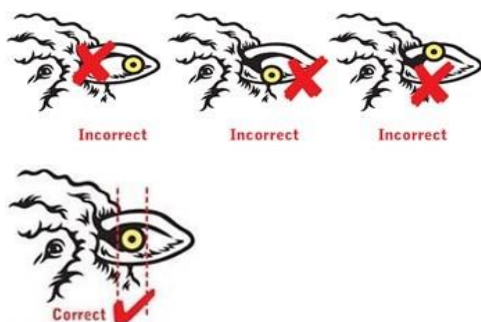
It is very important that the correct NLIS tag is used, if not it will falsely indicate the breeding and life history of an animal.

From 1 January 2022 all sheep and non-exempt goats, regardless of age, must be identified with an electronic NLIS (Sheep) tag before leaving a Victorian property. Goat producers must use accredited NLIS (Sheep) tags and must specify when placing orders that the tags they are purchasing will be used to identify goats. Tagging using an NLIS (Sheep) tag is optional for some goat breeds, in particular dairy goats.

For more information on exempt goats and to order NLIS tags online or to download an application form scan the QR code or visit the **Ag Vic** website and search '[Owning, keeping and moving sheep](#)'.



Be sure to follow the manufacturer's instructions when tagging your sheep or goats and use the recommended applicator to prevent tags falling out or being damaged. Applying tags correctly the first time avoids injury and pain to the animal.



⚠ If you don't comply with the tagging regulations:

The consequences of not complying with the tagging regulations can result in being issued with an infringement notice, or court action for more serious or repeat offences.

From 1 January 2025, eID will be mandatory in all Australian states for all sheep and farmed goats born from this date, prior to leaving the property.

Traceability Requirements for Sheep and Goat Movements

Before sheep and goats can be moved, unless they are an exempt breed of goat, they must have an NLIS device and be recorded on the PIC.

A **coloured** NLIS device for animals leaving their property of origin.

A **pink** NLIS device for animals who have lost their original tag and are no longer running on the property they were born on.



Tags can be ordered over the phone on **1800 678 779**, by scanning the QR code or online at: <https://agriculture.vic.gov.au/livestock-and-animals/national-livestock-identification-system/livestock-identification>

When selling stock, saleyards, abattoirs, and many producers legally require the movement record as an NVD. You may also be asked to supply a livestock health statement. You must ensure that both the NVD and health declaration form are filled out properly. More on these forms explained on the next page.

When buying sheep and goats, you **must** ensure they are tagged, that the supplier provides you with a movement record (NVD), and that they supply you with a sheep or goat health statement. Once you receive the purchased stock, you will be responsible for completing the NLIS transfer if purchased through a private sale or online sale such as AuctionsPlus. You must record the movement within 48 hours on the NLIS database. You will need to have the NLIS tag scanned for the number, or you will need to manually read the NLIS number on the outside of the tag and have the purchased stock moved to your PIC.

Year	Year	Colour	pink tag = post-breeder tags must be pink
2013	2021	yellow	
2014	2022	red	
2015	2023	sky blue	
2016	2024	black	
2017	2025	white	
2018	2026	orange	
2019	2027	light green	
2020	2028	purple	

When purchasing the animals from a saleyard, the agent will ensure the NLIS transfer is completed for you. Make sure you register and supply this information before bidding on stock.

LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION ASSURANCE (LPA)

If you plan on selling sheep or goats, your next step will be to gain your **Livestock Production Assurance (LPA) accreditation**.



The LPA program is Australia's red meat industry independently audited, on-farm assurance program. It is underpinned by seven key elements covering food safety, animal welfare and biosecurity. It provides evidence of livestock history and on-farm practices which are all

significantly important when transferring livestock through the value chain. There is NO requirement to be LPA accredited as it is voluntary. However, if you are not part of the program you will not be able to access LPA National Vendor Declaration forms.

There are non-LPA consignment forms available however, some saleyards and abattoirs may not accept them.



National Vendor Declarations (NVD's)

NVDs are central to Australia's red meat integrity system, as they communicate the food safety status of every animal as they move along each point in the value chain—between properties, to saleyards and to processors.

The NVD can be kept as a physical copy as a book, a downloadable form, or an eNVD (Electronic National Vendor Declaration). The eNVD can be accessed online or via a mobile phone app and sent directly to the driver and receiver. The NVD must be completed correctly so that the purchasers are aware of the stock history, including having any Hormone Growth Promoters, Withholding Periods or Export Slaughter Intervals.

Withholding Periods (WHP)

Most products used to treat stock for internal or external parasites or diseases have withholding periods (WHP). A product's WHP is the legal period required between treatment of stock and slaughter for domestic markets.

Export Slaughter Intervals (ESI)

Export Slaughter Interval (ESI) is the period that must lapse between chemical application to livestock and their slaughter for export. It is important to note that the WHP and ESI may differ in length making it of high importance that producers read the chemical label.

Together, the three elements, LPA, NVDs and NLIS, ensure the food safety, animal welfare, biosecurity and traceability of Australian red meat for our domestic and international customers.



For more information on how to complete an LPA NVD scan the QR code or visit: [National Vendor Declaration \(NVD\) | Integrity Systems](#)

ANIMAL HEALTH DECLARATIONS

Animal Health Declaration's (AHD's) are additional forms that can be requested from producers when buying animals. It is separate from the NVD as the NVD questions primarily relate to food safety, whereas AHD questions relate to animal health.

When purchasing livestock, it is recommended buyers ask for a copy of the AHD and use the information provided to determine the health risks that may be associated with the animals offered for sale. This will decrease the likelihood of diseases or pests being brought onto your property and spreading throughout Victoria.

To find out more on Animal Health Declarations scan the QR code or visit

farmbiosecurity.com.au/toolkit/declarations-and-statements

Health Treatment Records

It is in livestock owners' best interests to keep a record book to record dates and types of treatments used and any important information about this treatment e.g. WHPs.

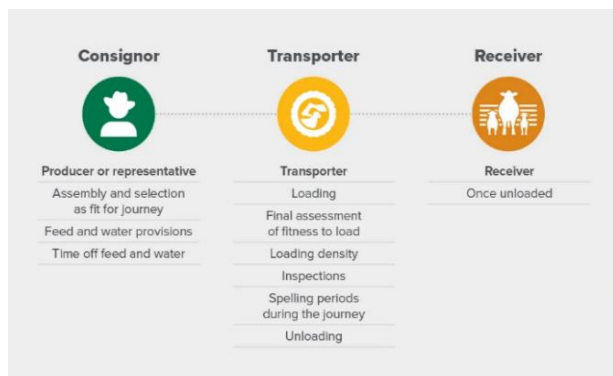


Download and print out an animal treatment record template by scanning the QR code below or by visiting the farm biosecurity website and searching for '[records](#)'.

TRANSPORT AND FIT-TO-LOAD REQUIREMENTS

Transport Hub

Meat and Livestock Australia's (MLA) transport hub brings together everything you need to know about transporting livestock safely, legally and humanely anywhere in Australia.



As seen above there are different animal welfare responsibilities for different parties when transporting stock. Remember as a producer it is your responsibility to correctly assemble and prepare the livestock and ensure animals are 'fit for the intended journey' and to consider things such as livestock curfew periods and maximum time off feed and water before loading. The Transport Hub website has important checklists, tips and critical information on all the above for producers.



Scan the QR code or search '[Transport Hub](#)' on the MLA website to find out your responsibilities as a producer.

Ag Vic Transport Tips

Ag Vic has some great advice when purchasing sheep and goats and transporting them back to the farm. Be aware of the requirements for transporting different classes of sheep and goats, eg. Lambs vs. Ewes.



For best practices when purchasing and transporting sheep and goats and back to the farm scan the QR code or visit [Transport and care of sheep | Agriculture Victoria](#)

Interstate Movement of Livestock

Requirements for movement of livestock may differ between states. Permits may be required for interstate movement of livestock.



For more information scan the QR code or visit agriculture.vic.gov.au/interstate-livestock-movements

ANIMAL HUSBANDRY

Animal husbandry is the term used to describe the breeding, raising, and caring for animals. It is critical to understand the basic needs of animals before purchasing livestock.

Good husbandry, hygiene and proper nutrition are all essential to maintain farm and animal health. At a basic level, you should make sure you:

- Have an appropriate living environment with suitable facilities for the type of livestock
- Identify your soil type and pasture species
- Understand seasonal changes and challenges and general livestock nutrition and mineral requirements
- Provide a clean and sufficient daily water supply
- Have time available to care for your animals

Living Environment and Facilities

When deciding what type of livestock to purchase, it is important to consider all the current facilities you have on your farm, the costs associated with installing additional, or fixing current infrastructure such as yards, sheds and fences to adequately maintain the animal's health and welfare.



Sheep taking shelter from the heat under a tree (AgVIC)

Throughout the year there are several livestock management events that you will need to conduct and will require strong and sturdy facilities. This may be lambing, marking or weaning lambs, vaccinating, drenching, or shearing.

Maintaining an environment for you and your stock that minimises health and safety risks is essential. For example, unmaintained fencing may cause the stock physical harm or be a risk factor for stock escaping their designated paddock.

An animal's energy requirement can almost double in colder weather, just to maintain body heat. Shelter can provide a warmer microclimate, reducing energy use and the need for supplementary feed and can also improve survival rate of newborns. Providing shade and shelter through trees and shrubs and infrastructure, can compensate for the loss of available grazing area.



For more information on sheep shelter scan the QR code or search '[Sheep shelter guidelines](#)' on the Ag Vic website.

For information on basic requirements of goats scan the QR code or visit [New Buyers Guide-Goats \(aabmgs.org.au\)](#)

Pasture, Nutrition, Mineral Requirements

The feed an animal consumes has huge impacts on their growth and overall health. Livestock nutritional requirements vary and are influenced by factors such as age, sex, breed, breeding stage and environment.

Pasture availability and quality will determine whether additional feed and/or mineral supplements are required.

For example, during periods of low pasture availability and quality, certain minerals may need to be supplemented to meet nutritional requirements.

Livestock may also require the supplementation of certain macro and micro minerals if their diet does not provide them enough to keep them healthy and free of illness. You can often provide these supplements to livestock as loose licks, lick blocks or vaccinations that contain the required minerals and decrease the likelihood of health issues occurring.

For example, a ewe suffering from a calcium deficiency (Hypocalcaemia) during the third trimester can result in death which is a highly preventable health issue and economic loss.

It is also important to consider the effects of mineral excess in the diet, which can also cause issues. Providing your stock with a nutritionally well-balanced diet that meets their requirements, will help prevent health issues from occurring.

Remember to always check the label of feed to make sure it suits your type of animal.



To find out more about mineral deficiencies in sheep and goats and how to identify them scan the QR code or visit the MLA website and search for '[Mineral deficiencies](#)'.

Stocking Rate and Carrying Capacity

For optimal pasture growth, consequent weight gains and soil protection, it is important to ensure that the stocking rate and carrying capacity (either short or long term) are in or near equilibrium. Keep in mind that:

Supply = Carrying Capacity

Demand = Stocking Rate



For more information on **carrying capacity** scan the QR code or visit [Utilisation and carrying capacity | Meat & Livestock Australia \(mla.com.au\)](#)



For more information on **stocking rate** the QR code or visit [Stocking rate calculator | Meat & Livestock Australia \(mla.com.au\)](#)

Water

It is important to know that livestock require copious amounts of clean, fresh water. Failure to provide water that is suitable and plentiful not only affects production and health but could be considered an animal welfare offence.

Your water source could include dams, rivers, creeks, channels, ground water such as bores, wells, or public supply. It is important to assess your water source to make sure it is suitable for livestock to drink.

Livestock can be sensitive to water, taste and odour and may reduce water intake if the water is unfavourable, potentially leading to a decrease in livestock performance (e.g. decreased weight gain) and an increase in health issues (e.g. salmonella infection).

Issues with water quality could occur due to its chemical properties (pH), or physical causes (salt level, algae). Some of these issues may be easy to identify and

recognise, while others may need more research and require scientific testing. Water quality tests should be carried out annually while water quantity checks should be carried out weekly or even daily during hot periods.



Find out more on water quality for livestock scan the QR code or visit:

[Managing farm water supplies | Agriculture Victoria](#)

Vaccinations

Vaccinations are a great way to prevent and eliminate animal health issues and lead to improvements in welfare and productivity.

Some things to consider when using vaccinations:

- Utilise resources such as MLA and Ag Vic who have a range of information relating to sheep and goat vaccinations.
- Keep records through an animal health plan of what you use and when and consider coordinating vaccinations with other animal husbandry activities such as shearing, marking and weaning if possible.
- Check the label to ensure you use and store vaccines correctly. For example, some vaccines will recommend booster shots while others are a one-off shot. Additionally, some vaccines must be administered subcutaneously (administered under the skin) and some will be intramuscular (administered in the muscle). If you are unsure on any of the above it is important to consult a vet.
- Seek advice from your vet or animal health professional if unsure what vaccines should be given, when they should be given or if unsure on how to administer.

Visit the following websites for more information:



Find out more on water quality for livestock scan the QR code or visit:

[Vaccinating Sheep | Meat & Livestock Australia \(mla.com.au\)](#)



Find out more on water quality for livestock scan the QR code or visit:
[Goat Diseases and Vaccinations - The Farmers' Guide \(mla.com.au\)](#)

Time Management

Estimating how much free time you have available to spend caring for your animals is something that should be considered prior to buying livestock. As an owner, you will have to make time to regularly check your stock's health and welfare, the feed availability and water supply.

The time that will be required will depend on the type of livestock you choose to buy and the management systems you choose to undertake.

Livestock requirements may be more time consuming during certain periods of the year. As owners you should ensure you are prepared and able to give the time required or be prepared to employ an experienced individual to undertake these tasks.

SHEEP AND GOAT HANDLING

In terms of facilities and owner safety, owning sheep or goats is a little less stressful in comparison to cattle. Landowners that are wanting to purchase sheep or goats must have suitably constructed yards and race. The positive to owning sheep or goats is being able to use portable yards, meaning that if your property does not have permanent yarding facilities you can still own livestock without having to pay for the installation of yards like you would for cattle. However, portable yards must be solid and established in a way that is safe for both humans and the livestock.

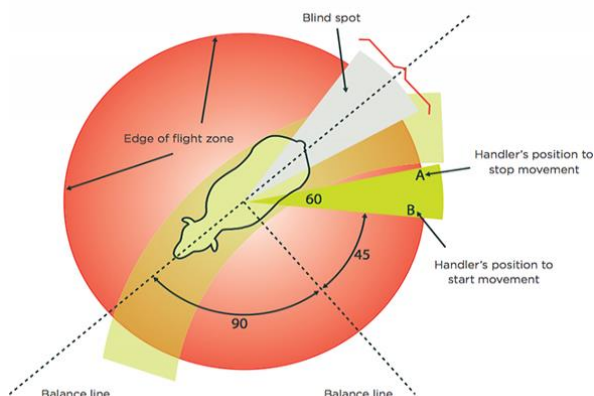
Sheep handling

Successful sheep handling depends on understanding the natural behaviour of sheep and taking advantage of this. Sheep have exceptional vision and tend to rely on this heavily rather than their hearing or smell. They are highly social flock animals who form a tight group and follow the leader. Sheep learn quickly and from a young age, so it is important for producers to let their sheep become familiar with them and the yards.

It is important to note that the isolation of a single sheep should be avoided. Isolated sheep can become frantic and injure their handlers or themselves.



To find out more about sheep and goat behaviour and handling watch this video from NSW DPI by visiting [Sheep – handling \(nsw.gov.au\)](https://www.nsw.gov.au/sheep-handling) or by scanning the QR code



Flight zone of a Sheep and Goat. Source: WorkSafe NZ

Goat Handling

As with sheep, vision, point of balance and flight zone are important considerations when handling goats. However, goats do behave differently to sheep and should not be expected to respond as they would when being handled.

Goats have a hierarchical or mob structure. Guiding the leaders in the mob will encourage the rest to follow. It is generally advisable not to rush goats but rather move them as fast as the slowest goat in the mob to allow them to become comfortable with the situation.



To find out more about handling goats scan the QR code or visit the MLA website and search for '[goat handling](#)'

Shearing

Shearing is the process whereby the sheep's fleece is removed using mechanical shears. Sheep breeds that are grown for their wool (e.g. Merinos) are typically shorn once a year and it usually occurs in spring or summer. Training is required to do the job of shearing so you will need to hire a professional shearer.

If you are thinking more of having companion sheep that are there to purely keep the grass down, you are probably better off choosing one of the breeds that naturally shed their wool like a Dorper or a new breed that requires less shearing such as Australian Whites.

Shearing is listed under the Health and Welfare regulations you must follow when owning sheep. If you do not shear sheep that are producing wool, you will find that the health of the animal will decline. Things such as flystrike will be more prevalent, and the welfare of your animal will be compromised, and possible legal punishment could occur.

ANIMAL HEALTH AND WELFARE

Roles and Responsibilities

As a livestock owner, you have an obligation to fulfill a duty of care for your animals which includes:

- Understanding, supporting and applying the best practice of animal welfare that aligns with legislation, codes of practice, guidelines and quality assurance programs.
- Ensuring that your animals do not impact adversely on other animals.

The Ag Vic website has some important information for livestock owners that outlines welfare standards and guidelines under the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986* that every livestock owner should be aware of such as husbandry essentials, protection from disease and humane destruction.

Failure to comply with animal welfare legislation may result in regulatory action being taken.



To find out more scan the QR code or visit the Ag Vic [Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986](#) page, click on the '[Victorian codes of practise overview](#)' and select the relevant animal.



Another great resource is the [animalwelfarestandards.net.au](https://www.animalwelfarestandards.net.au) website which also outlines different standards and guidelines for different animals including sheep and goats.

Health

Familiarising yourself with the healthy state of your animals and keeping an eye out for health warning signs, is an essential part of caring for livestock. Regular stock checks will help you become more attuned to their normal behaviours and to quickly become aware of any

warning signs that your animals are becoming unwell, such as:

- Weight loss/loss of appetite
- Lethargy
- Decreased or affected milk production (dairy)
- Diarrhoea or constipation
- Abnormal movements (e.g. limping, difficulty standing or changes in stance)
- Swelling
- Nasal or eye discharge

It is a good idea to get to know the common sheep or goat diseases or health issues in your district and whether they are likely to affect your property. Prevention is always better than treatment!

Victorian Notifiable Diseases

Notifiable diseases, when suspected by owners, vets or laboratories, must be reported within a defined time frame.

Livestock owners may recognise a disease is present in their stock by observing any of the following symptoms:

- High mortality rate or sickness in animals
- Sudden death
- Decreased milk production
- Rapid spread of illness through the flock/ herd
- Blisters, erosions, or ulcers in their mouth, on/around the muzzle, feet, udder and teats
- Excessive nasal discharge or salivation
- Nervous signs such as tremors, uncharacteristic aggression or paralysis
- Unusual disease symptoms
- Disease affects multiple species

How to notify?

There are three ways you can contact Agriculture Victoria's Chief Veterinary Officer when you suspect a notifiable disease.

1. Call the Emergency Animal Disease Watch Hotline on **1800 675 888**
2. The **Notify Now app**, which allows users to send through high-quality geo-located photographs of affected animals, with the owner's details and Property Identification Code

3. Disease notification form
<https://agriculture.vic.gov.au/biosecurity/animal-diseases/notifiable-diseases>

Which can be emailed to **cvo.victoria@agriculture.vic.gov.au** or posted to:

Chief Veterinary Officer Agriculture Victoria
475-485 Mickleham Rd
Attwood VIC 3049



Emergency Animal Disease (EAD) hotline number

SHEEP AND GOAT HEALTH

Any stock arriving on your property present a risk of introducing disease, weeds and pests. Sheep and goats may appear healthy at the time of arrival; however, they could be carrying internal or external parasites or exotic weed seeds that are undetectable at the time of arrival.

It is a good idea to have a dedicated containment zone for isolating new animals away from your existing livestock until you can be sure they are free of disease. This also includes your own stock which have returned from another property. It is also a good way for them to empty out so there is less chance of introducing unwanted weed seeds through excretion of them in faecal deposits throughout the property.

Should you be concerned with an animal's health status contact your district veterinarian and seek advice.



For further information on sheep and goat diseases that may affect your stock scan the QR code or visit

<https://www.mla.com.au/research-and-development/animal-health-welfare-and-biosecurity/diseases/>

Footrot

Footrot is a highly contagious bacterial infection. It is more likely to occur in moist, warm environments, and you should suspect it when multiple animals are lame in multiple feet. An odour is often associated with foot rot

described as a rotten cheese smell and can become flyblown during spring and summer. Preventing footrot is done through implementation of a biosecurity plan that may involve purchasing new stock from reputable producers, inspecting feet on arrival, running them through a chemical foot bath and placing them in quarantine (ideally until they have been through at least one moist warm period).

To find out more about Footrot visit:

<https://www.mla.com.au/research-and-development/animal-health-welfare-and-biosecurity/diseases/infectious/footrot/>

Lice

The most common lice affecting sheep and goats is body lice. You may see your animals scratching up against a fence or gate, biting their fleece or scratching with their hind leg, which can all be indications that lice is present in your flock/herd. It is important as a producer you understand the lifecycle of lice and how it survives and spreads. Attaining this knowledge will help you monitor lice populations and will improve decision making around eradicating lice.

Gastrointestinal Worms

Internal parasites are a major problem in Australian sheep and goats.

There are four types of worms that have a huge negative impact on production when not treated:

1. Brown stomach worm
2. Black scour worm
3. Barbers pole worm
4. Liver Fluke

Worms are treated by giving the animals an oral medication called a drench, however, worms generally develop resistance quickly to drench groups, meaning alternating between chemical groups is a must. Doing regular worm egg counts and following a management plan will help you overcome the potential for worm infestations and drench resistance forming in your flock. Be mindful that goats and sheep require different dosage rates and goats are only allowed certain drenches if their milk is being consumed by humans.



To find out more about this watch the following webinar: [Youtube | Stock Sense Managing Internal Parasites](#)

Other great resources for gastrointestinal worms in sheep and goats include:



[Internal Parasites in Sheep and Goats \(oregonstate.edu\)](#)



[WormBoss Worm Control Program for Goats and Sheep - Australian Smallholders - WormBoss](#)

Flystrike

Flystrike is common disease in Victoria that creates animal welfare issues and can result in death. It has an annual cost of \$280 million in Australia. It is most common when the season is warm yet wet.

Flystrike is caused from flies breeding on and feeding off damaged skin caused by urine, diarrhoea and the continual wetting on the fleece. While there are many different types of flystrike, the most common in Victoria are Breech Strike and Body Strike.



There are several preventative methods and treatment options if you believe your flock has flystrike. For more information visit [Flystrike - Stock Sense Fact Sheets \(vff.org.au\)](#) or scan the QR code.

Johne's Disease (JD)



Johne's disease (AKA: Ovine Johne's Disease (OJD - sheep and goats)) is a chronic wasting disease caused by the bacterium *Mycobacterium avium subsp. Paratuberculosis*. It invariably leads to the death of the animal. In Victoria, producers are encouraged to contact Agriculture Victoria if they suspect OJD is present in their stock so that they can be properly examined. In Victoria, OJD is a notifiable disease, meaning once a OJD case has been confirmed, Agriculture Victoria must be notified.

Clinical signs that would lead you to suspect OJD:

- Progressive weight loss
- Emaciation in older animals despite a good appetite
- Affected animals may also develop diarrhoea and bottle jaw

Owners of flocks at risk of infection with OJD can speak to their local vet about implementing a vaccination program with the vaccine Gudair.

To find out more about Johne's disease scan the QR code or visit: agriculture.vic.gov.au/biosecurity/animal-diseases/sheep-diseases/ovine-johnes-disease-ojd



Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD)



Foot and mouth disease (FMD) is a highly contagious viral disease that affects cloven-hoofed animals including:

- Cattle

- Sheep
- Pigs
- Goats

This disease has the capacity to spread rapidly between animals through both direct and indirect contact. Signs can vary and are sometimes too subtle to detect.

An affected animal may appear depressed, have a fever or be exhibiting some or all of the following signs:

- Sores and blisters in the mouth, tongue and on the feet
- Profuse drooling and smacking lips
- Sudden and uncharacterised lameness
- Tendency to lie down and reluctance to move as a result of lameness
- Unwillingness to allow lambs to suckle in sheep

FMD is an exotic disease, meaning it is not present in Australia. Farm biosecurity plays a key role in protecting the Australian livestock industry from pests and diseases. It is a good idea for producers to develop a biosecurity plan fit for their farm to help safeguard them from any potential disease outbreaks such as FMD. Remaining vigilant is vital for serious

diseases such as FMD and early detection is the key to minimising social and economic impacts.

If you suspect FMD is present in your stock, contact the 24hr emergency Animal Disease Hotline on **1800 675 888**



To find out more on FMD scan the QR code or visit <https://www.vff.org.au/stock-sense/resources-factsheets/foot-and-mouth/>

BIOSECURITY

Whether you own only a few head of livestock or hundreds, strong biosecurity practices are crucial to preventing and reducing introduction of diseases or pests.

On-farm biosecurity planning

For landowners, biosecurity planning involves looking at all the biosecurity risk pathways associated with your property and deciding how you are best going to mitigate these. It is important to document these in your biosecurity management plan. Things such as quarantining new stock for at least 21 days will help decrease the

chance of a disease, weeds, or pests being introduced to your property.

A biosecurity plan involves addressing the potential biosecurity risk of people entering your property without authorisation. Anybody that enters your property must comply with your biosecurity management plan when they enter, whilst on your property and when they leave. Not complying with your biosecurity management plan is an offence and penalties apply.



Example Biosecurity Sign. Source: Farm Biosecurity

A great resource for this is the Farm Biosecurity website, which is a joint initiative from Animal Health Australia and Plant Health Australia. This website has resources, information and templates to guide you through creating your own biosecurity plan and sign.



Scan the QR Code or visit the website farmbiosecurity.com.au for more information.

Farm Visits – Come Clean, Go Clean

Come Clean, Stay Clean, Go Clean is one of the simplest yet most effective strategies for minimising the spread of diseases, weeds and pests.



To explore this and other tips around biosecurity when visiting farms scan the QR code or visit:

agriculture.vic.gov.au/information-for-farm-visits

Ruminant Feed Ban and Restricted Animal Material (RAM)

Ruminants are animals that chew cud, including cattle, buffalo, sheep, goats, deer and other cloven-hooved species.

There are bans on feeding RAM to ruminant animals to minimise the risk of diseases such as Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE or 'Mad Cow' Disease) and other rare brain diseases being passed back through the animal and potentially to humans.

Example of a product containing RAM



Common examples of RAM include:

- meat and offal
- meat and bone meal, poultry, fish and feather meals

feed that contains one or more types of animal matter including:

- poultry feed including chicken, duck, and turkey feed
- pig feed
- dog and cat food
- pig and poultry manure / litter
- eggs
- organic fertilisers and composts such as blood and bone fertiliser, mushroom compost, and any other compost made with animal matter.

Additional biosecurity resources

Below are great resources and templates available to assist you with your biosecurity plan.

Agriculture Victoria has created a website for smaller landholders called **Backyard Biosecurity**. This page includes insightful podcasts, newsletters and videos outlining responsibilities and explaining simple ways landholders can improve their biosecurity. It also has free courses to help improve your biosecurity awareness.



Scan the QR code or visit the [Agriculture Victoria Backyard Biosecurity](#) website to learn more.

MLA also has some essential information and tips relating to biosecurity for livestock owners.

Create your own **biosecurity toolkit** with **Farm Biosecurity** and let it provide tailored information to you based on the type of animals you own.



For more information scan the QR code or visit [Create your own biosecurity kit - Farm Biosecurity](#).






For more information scan the QR code or visit MLA's website and search '[Farm Biosecurity](#)'.





APPENDIX 1:





MANAGEMENT CHECKLIST FOR LIVESTOCK OWNERS

The following table provides a checklist for landholders on recommended management practices and legislation requirements that people owning livestock in Victoria must comply with. To access website resources, **scan the QR code** to be taken to the respective web page.





CHECKLIST		
	Resource	Notes or tick-off
1. Before purchasing livestock		
Register for a Property Identification Code (PIC)	 PIC agriculture.vic.gov.au	
Fencing is complete and stock proof	 Managing livestock on small properties (publications.qld.gov.au)	

Adequate water and infrastructure available	 Check your livestock's water quality (vff.org.au)	
Adequate handling facilities in place	 Circular sheep yard design and construction (nsw.gov.au)	
2. Purchasing livestock		
<i>Buying from an agent of saleyards</i>		
<p>Register for sale and supply PIC details: <i>When purchasing the sheep and goats from a saleyard, the agent/ saleyard will be responsible for the NLIS transfer. If the livestock are purchased through a private sale, it is the buyer's responsibility to ensure the NLIS transfer is completed within 48 hours. Make sure you register and supply this information before bidding on stock.</i></p>		
<i>Buying stock via private sale</i>		
<p><i>At private sale, the buyer will be responsible for completing the NLIS transfer. You must record the movement within 48 hours on the NLIS database. You will need to have the animals scanned with a scanner, or you will need to manually read the NLIS number on the outside of the tag.</i></p>		

<p>Ensure stock required have NLIS devices</p>	 <p>NLIS (agriculture.vic.gov.au)</p>	
<p>Ensure the vendor provides you with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An NVD waybill or a movement record • An animal health declaration 	 <p>Transport Hub (mla.com.au)</p>  <p>Declarations - Farm Biosecurity</p>	
<p>Register for a NLIS producer account</p>	 <p>Register (nlis.com.au)</p>	

Buying stock via private sale (cont.)		
If buying livestock privately, organise to borrow/purchase an NLIS reader to scan tags	 Moving animals between properties (agriculture.vic.gov.au)	
3. Transporting livestock		
Have you gone through the fit to load checklist and resources on the Transport Hub? Some points to consider:	 Transport Hub (mla.com.au)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are the animals fit-to-load? • Will the journey meet livestock movement codes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travel timeframes • Time off feed and water • Management plan once stock arrive 	 Fit-to-load Guide (mla.com.au)	
4. On arrival of livestock		
Scan NLIS devices and complete the database transfer of all privately purchased animals	 Moving animals between properties (agriculture.vic.gov.au)	
Follow your biosecurity management plan for farm inputs (e.g. quarantining livestock in yard to reduce weed seed risk, parasite risk, and to ensure stock health)	 Create your own biosecurity kit (farmbiosecurity.com.au)	
5. Ongoing livestock management		
Welfare/health checks		

	Health and Welfare Sheep agriculture.vic.gov.au  Australian Animal Welfare (animalwelfarestandards.net.au)	
Vaccinations/parasite control	 Home - WormBoss	
Supplementary feeding	 Supplementary feeding mla.com.au	
Fencing, water and feed monitoring/maintenance	 Water quality mla.com.au	
6. Before selling		
Ensure livestock have NLIS device attached and/or replace lost tags	 Owning, keeping and moving sheep agriculture.vic.gov.au	
Complete an NVD waybill or a movement record	 Movement	

	documentation\agriculture.vic.gov.au	
Complete a health statement	 Declarations - Farm Biosecurity	
<p>As a consignor have you gone through the fit to load checklist and resources on the Transport Hub? Some points to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fit for the intended journey • Feed and water provisions • Time off feed and water before loading • Class of stock and associated requirements 	 Transport Hub\mla.com.au  Fit-to-load Guide\mla.com.au	
6. Before selling (cont.)		
Check withholding periods and export slaughter intervals	 Residues\mla.com.au	

APPENDIX 2: ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

In the table below you can find additional resources focusing on sheep and goats.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES	
Resource Name	Website
Sheep – Agriculture Victoria	agriculture.vic.gov.au/livestock-and-animals/sheep
Drought feeding and management of sheep	Sheep-drought-feeding-guide.pdf (feedinglivestock.vic.gov.au)

A guide to goat husbandry	MLA - Goat Husbandry
A guide to sheep husbandry	MLA - Sheep Husbandry
Nutrition and body condition scoring sheep	<u>Nutrition and body condition score Zoetis AU</u>
Making more from Sheep	<u>makingmorefromsheep.com.au/index-2.</u>
NLIS (Sheep and Goat) Standards 2022 edition	<u>Agriculture Victoria NLIS Sheep and Goat Standards</u>



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