



Leading Sheep Sheep Management Alert



Timely Tips for Spring/Summer 2011

Given the high probability of above average long-term rainfall and the continuing La Niña conditions, producers need to watch out for conditions favouring high flystrike risk. It is best to be prepared well ahead of time so you don't get caught out. During high fly periods, chemical availability and supplies may be low. So make sure you have sufficient chemicals on hand to meet your needs well ahead of time. If you decide to treat your sheep for fly, it is worthwhile checking for lice and if necessary treating at the same time.

Tips for reducing flystrike risk in your sheep	Tips for reducing lice in your sheep
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Use fly traps to monitor sheep blowfly (<i>Lucilia cuprina</i>) numbers, particularly as it warms up (>15 degrees) and when there is some moisture about. This will also help you to identify periods of high strike risk.2. Choose the right chemical for flystrike prevention and avoid withholding problems by using www.flyboss.org.au to access the latest information. Use the interactive tools on the FlyBoss site to assess your flock's flystrike risk.3. Look at shearing and crutching dates to reduce flystrike risk. Consider changing these dates if it will assist reducing your flock's flystrike risk.4. Reduce the susceptibility of your sheep for breech strike. Breed for and buy sheep with fewer wrinkles.5. Reduce the susceptibility of your sheep for body strike. Breed for and buy sheep with less signs of fleece rot.6. Sheep that are struck on the body or breech should be culled.7. Evaluate your sheep to understand their susceptibility to flystrike. Their susceptibility is your risk to having big extra costs and a big loss of sheep. Wrinkle and fleece rot score a random sample of a 100 of your young ewes before they are classed. Keep this record each year as a benchmark as to whether you are making progress in reducing wrinkle and fleece rot and therefore the risk of flystrike.8. How do I reduce my flock's level of wrinkle? Cull out of your self replacing merino flock the ewes with the most wrinkle. Depending how many you can class out, this may be the 7% - 15% of sheep with the worst wrinkle. If these ewes can't be sold, join them to, for example a meat breed ram, and sell all their progeny. Buy rams with much less wrinkle – preferably with low Australian Sheep Breeding Values (ASBV) for wrinkle. If necessary, change your ram source to achieve less wrinkle plus production.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Current wool prices more than justify the additional effort into the management of lice in your sheep. Damage from a lice infestation can reduce fleece weight by up to 1kg which could cost you up to \$350 per bale of wool.2. There are three aspects to lice control:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prevent re-infestation of your sheep by keeping out strays and getting clean musters• Checking for lice• Treating your sheep thoroughly with an effective product to ensure you eradicate lice.3. Visit the LiceBoss website at http://www.wool.com/Grow_LiceBoss.htm to find out more information about lice.4. Lice are a host-specific pest insect. They are transferred almost exclusively from sheep to other sheep. Sheep that are introduced to your property or that stray within property boundaries could infest previously clean mobs. To prevent new infestations, quarantine introduced sheep for as long as possible and treat before moving them to new mobs.5. Check sheep regularly for signs of lice infestation, and particularly before shearing. Finding one louse is an infestation and necessitates treatment of all sheep on the property.6. Chemical resistance in lice populations is a significant problem. Limiting exposure of lice to chemical and careful and thorough treatment of all sheep when required will help prevent resistance and increase chemical efficiency when treatment is needed.7. Know which chemical group your louse control product belongs to. There are five effective chemical groups available to treat lice infestations. Sheep owners should aim to rotate between groups to assist prevention of resistance to new control products. The latest product information (for both lice and fly control) is available on the FlyBoss website.

...Flystrike

9. Use the same strategy to reduce your flock's level of fleece rot. That is, cull sheep with the worst signs of fleece rot.
10. Use the same strategy to reduce flystrike risk if you are retaining wethers. That is, cull the wethers with the most wrinkle and worst signs of fleece rot.
11. If mulesing use an accredited operator. Consider using TriSolfen pain relief.
12. Reduce mulesing where possible. For example, if you are selling your wethers into the meat trade at a young age, consider not mulesing these sheep. Ensure you have a plan to manage any extra fly risk.
13. Do your bit to let your customers know you care. Complete the National Wool Declaration to show if you are not mulesing or using alternatives, even if it is only for some mobs.
14. To find out more information visit www.flyboss.org.au



Lucilia cuprina - Australian sheep blowfly



Flystrike

...Lice

8. Treatment after shearing is the most effective way to chemically eradicate lice from your sheep. Always apply chemicals as directed and at the specified dose rate. Incorrect usage of chemicals is another contributing factor to the development of resistance.
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10. Allow sheep to stand in yards for a short time after backliner treatment to improve contact rate of chemical.
11. To find out more information visit the LiceBoss website at www.wool.com/Grow_LiceBoss.htm



Damage from lice infestation



Leading the Way

Leading Sheep is an education framework for leading the adoption of new technologies and practices to increase the productivity of the Queensland sheep industry. Leading Sheep is an active, regionally-based project initiated by Australian Wool Innovation and operates in partnership with the Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation (DEEDI) and AgForce. For more information, visit www.leadingsheep.com.au or call DEEDI on 13 25 23.

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