

July 2018
Animal disease watch hotline: 1800 675 888
Contact: Your local PIRSA office, local private veterinary practitioner or Biosecurity SA - Animal Health at Glenside on 8207 7900.

Endemic sheep disease management programs

Frequently Asked Questions

Changes to the SA Johne's disease in sheep and footrot management programs will be phased in over the coming months from July 2018.

Producers should note:

- Johne's disease in sheep (JD) and Footrot are notifiable diseases and must be reported to PIRSA
- National Vendor Declaration's (NVDs) and National Sheep Health Declarations (NSHDs) are still compulsory.
- Buyer beware means you need to check the status of animals BEFORE you purchase- check the NVD and NSHD.
- The only change to SA entry requirements is the addition of Approved vaccinates for the JD program.

For more information see the relevant sections below:

Section 1: Johne's disease in sheep specific questions

Section 2: Footrot specific questions

Section 3: General disease management program changes questions.

Section 1: Johne's disease in sheep specific questions

- a) What changes are being made to the Johne's disease in sheep management programs and why?

The SA Ovine Johne's Disease (OJD) Control program was regularly reviewed to ensure the best outcomes for the South Australian Sheep Industry. Factors that contributed to the change were difficulties with accurately detecting infected properties when level of disease is low, vaccine being very effective at managing disease levels on farm but not achieving eradication of the bacterium which result in the continued spread of the bacterium. With the national move by the abattoirs to change to a voluntary producer requested JD abattoir monitoring program it was no longer possible

to continue with the previous SA OJD control program. The new OJD management program aims to minimise the economic impact of JD for the South Australian Sheep Industry through supporting both known infected and undetected or free properties.

The major components of the new OJD management program are:

- Removal of orders and change in the notifiable disease status: properties known to be infected with JD will no longer be under movement restrictions and are able to trade animals.
- Voluntary detection of disease: All on-farm investigations and abattoir monitoring will only be conducted when requested by the producer. PIRSA will no longer be undertaking routine testing of trace or neighbouring properties.
- Greater focus on producer education and how to source low-risk stock.
- Continued support to assist producers undertake effective disease management.

See further details below.

b) Does this mean that we are not part of a Regional Biosecurity Plan Area (RBPA)?

Regional Biosecurity Plan Areas were a part of the National OJD management plan which was recently reviewed. Regional Biosecurity Plan Areas will continue in the future as the national management of JD is transitioned into the Sheep Health Project with other diseases like footrot and ovine brucellosis. Unlike interstate RBPAs the South Australian RBPA is managed through regulated interstate movement restrictions. These **interstate movement restrictions will still apply** for all sheep entering South Australia until further industry consultation.

c) Do these changes affect the Sheep Market Assurance Program (MAP) in any way?

No. SheepMAP is a national program therefore the changes to the SA OJD program will not affect it. Under the new national management arrangements for Johne's disease SheepMAP, has been identified as one of the Sheep Health Project tools that can be used for on-farm Johne's disease control.

d) Does JD abattoir surveillance in SA happen automatically?

No. A producer must now request their sheep to be inspected for JD. Currently this can only occur at the TFI Lobethal plant. The request form and further information can be found at http://www.pir.sa.gov.au/biosecurity/animal_health/sheep/health/ojd/detection. If a producer requests their sheep to be inspected, they will receive confirmation of the findings a week or two after the consignment is processed. If there is no request, there is no inspection.

e) If my sheep flock come up positive on my requested JD abattoir surveillance, what will happen?

If a producer has animals that come up positive on laboratory testing for JD after requesting abattoir surveillance, the property is considered infected or suspect for JD. As JD is a notifiable disease PIRSA will record this information on its confidential property database. PIRSA will work with affected producers to formulate an individual property management plan to assist producers to reach a low risk status. There will be no quarantine orders or movement restrictions placed on the property but producers will be required to declare their status.

f) If my sheep flock is diagnosed with JD from a disease investigation (Private vet or PIRSA officer), what will happen?

Where producers have requested the disease investigation then the process will be the same as if the disease was detected through abattoir surveillance (see question e above).

g) If my sheep flock is diagnosed with JD, will my neighbours be notified by PIRSA?

No. There will be no mandatory tracing or neighbor notifications by PIRSA when disease is reported on a property. As a part of meeting biosecurity obligations to reduce the risk of JD to the industry infected producers should notify other producers (neighbours or producers they have sold stock to) of the change of JD status. When a producer notifies their neighbours or producers they have sold stock to, PIRSA can provide support by talking to individual producers and hold community meetings to provide advice on undertaking risk assessments and best practice disease management. Upon written request of the infected producer PIRSA can undertake notification on their behalf.

h) My property is currently under quarantine for JD. What happens to me?

Properties currently under quarantine will be risk assessed and if JD is considered under a reasonable level of management and your animals do not pose a significant risk to the industry, then the order will be released. Once this order is removed you will be free to trade sheep from your property however you must continue to act in a biosecure manner - this means declaring your status on your compulsory NSHD prior to selling animals, not selling clinically diseased animals and managing the health and welfare of your livestock. Should producers fail to undertake reasonable measures to manage JD on their property then an individual order under the Livestock Act may be issued. It is recommended that you continue with your Property Disease Management Plan.

i) If I think sheep on my farm have JD, where can I get help?

Where producers notice sheep that have symptoms consistent with JD (wasting, increased mortality, tail end in the mob) they should contact their private veterinarians or PIRSA to have disease investigation conducted. Subsidies are available to assist producers with costs associated with the investigation and laboratory testing. JD will present very similar to intestinal parasites and trace mineral deficiencies. To minimise the economic impact of endemic diseases thorough disease investigations are recommended to ensure an accurate diagnosis and correct treatment/preventative actions are undertaken.

j) As an infected or “at-risk” (neighbour or trace property that has tested negative) producer after 1 July 2018 - will the vaccine subsidy still be available?

No. From 1 July 2018 vaccine subsidies are longer available. This applies to both properties currently under property disease management plans and any new detections. With removal of most of the regulated components of the program it is no longer appropriate to provide a vaccine subsidy. It is recommended that you continue or commence a Gudair vaccination program to ensure that JD is effectively managed on your property. PIRSA Animal Health Officers can discuss any implications for not undertaking a Gudair vaccination program. JD vaccine should be taken up by producers as a preventative risk management tool rather than waiting until suspicion or detection of disease occurs. Producers in high risk areas or with high risk businesses should consider whether to incorporate Gudair vaccine in their regular animal health program as they do with other vaccines and intestinal parasite treatments.

k) What rules will apply to my neighbour with JD?

Your neighbour will have to declare their status when trading sheep and must ensure they are managing JD on their property. This can be achieved by undertaking such actions as vaccination or other management practices to minimise the occurrence of disease, only selling sheep to other producers that are not clinically affected with disease (i.e. approved vaccinates), selling diseased animals to abattoirs or feedlots and minimise potential for sheep to stray from the property. Should the producer fail to manage disease and be creating a risk then PIRSA officers can issue an order under the *Livestock Act 1997* requiring actions to be undertaken or have restrictions placed on them.

l) I have a next-door neighbor that I think has JD and their sheep are regularly straying. What can I do?

As with any disease in sheep, managing your own biosecurity is the best way to manage your risk. Consider the risk these sheep pose to your business and whether you should be vaccinating with Gudair. PIRSA Animal Health officers have powers under the *Livestock Act 1997* that can be used to assist in these sort of situations. Please contact PIRSA to discuss your individual case.

m) How does this affect me buying stock at a market or through other platforms?

Properties that were previously under movement restrictions may now be able to sell through saleyards and via other platforms. You must be aware of the health status of the stock you are buying i.e. **check the NSHD**. Livestock agents can assist you with accessing this information on the NSHD. It is not sufficient to just check that the animals are not from an infected property, you need to determine what evidence this status is based on or what other risk mitigation measures are in place (see question q and r). Producer declarations of infection status can be unreliable as they may not be aware they have OJD or undertaken any form of testing. SheepMAP properties are the lowest risk properties for OJD. If you purchase infected or suspect animals you will by default obtain an infected status on your farm. If you wish to buy at risk, suspect, untested or infected animals, it is up to you to manage the disease and prevent spreading it further, and consequently understand your own trade restrictions.

n) Can I access stock from a flock that has JD? How does this affect my disease status and what does it mean if I then get the disease?

If you access stock from an infected or suspect flock you will most likely introduce the causative bacterium with them. You need to ensure that you manage the biosecurity risk those animals pose by managing the disease. The best way to manage the disease is by vaccination using Gudair. You must manage the disease in such a way that animal welfare is not compromised such as animals not suffering severe clinical disease, starving, emaciated or dying. Due to the likelihood that animals you introduce will have the bacterium, your property inherits the same or suspect disease status and must be declared on the NSHD in any future trading from your property.

o) Can I now trade sheep freely with other states?

No. You must check the entry requirements for each state as to how you can undertake trade there. It was always possible to sell sheep from SA properties that were known to be infected with JD. The restrictions relate to bringing sheep into SA. For JD from 1 July 2018 approved vaccinates are allowed to enter SA with further industry consultation to be undertaken in the next six months to determine what, if any, movement restrictions will remain in place.

p) Can I sell sheep from a property that's infected with JD?

Yes you can but you need to minimise risk to other producers and industry by undertaking some biosecurity obligations relating to trading animals. Any animals that are likely to be diseased are to be sold direct to an abattoir or via a feedlot. Any animals that are intended to live beyond 18 months (i.e. breeding or wool production) of age are approved vaccinates (i.e. vaccinated prior to 16 weeks of age) and have a NLIS tag with a V on it prior to leaving the property. Any unvaccinated animals that you may wish to sell (other than direct to an abattoir or via feedlot) are to have a NLIS tag with a T on it prior to leaving your property. You must also declare on the NSHD an infected

property status. Failure to undertake reasonable biosecurity obligations can result in issuing of an order under the *Livestock Act 1997*.

q) How can I be sure that properties are free from JD infection before buying sheep?

Properties that have a Sheep MAP accreditation have undertaken a level of testing and maintain high standards of biosecurity. This is the best source of sheep that have a low risk of being infected with JD. The longer they have been in the program and the more testing they have undertaken will provide a greater level of assurance. It should be noted that many producers may not be aware that they have certain diseases and declaration of infection status on the NSHD may not be reliable. You should always determine your level of assurance you desire to ensure that animals are not affected with a disease. For instance, what proof does the farmer have they are low risk? Do they have evidence of negative test results?

r) Other than Sheep MAP how else can I know if I am purchasing “low risk” sheep?

Without undertaking testing there is no way to reliably determine if sheep are not infected with JD. If you wish to purchase sheep that have a low risk of being diseased then there are some basic factors you can consider. The environment will influence disease occurrence in animals. Those that have been born and raised their entire life in low rainfall areas with low stocking rates are less likely to develop disease even if infection is present. The other significant influence on disease is vaccination, sheep purchased from properties where all animals are approved vaccinates will have a lower risk of developing disease. Just remember if you are purchasing unvaccinated sheep and introducing them to a high rainfall/stocking density property you should consider vaccinating them on arrival.

s) What is an “approved vaccinate” sheep

An Approved vaccinate is a sheep that is identified by an NLIS (sheep) ‘V’ tag and is:

- vaccinated with JD vaccine by 16 weeks of age, or
- vaccinated with JD vaccine after 16 weeks of age, when the flock:
 - was in the SheepMAP, or
 - had undertaken a negative Faecal 350 test in the two (2) years preceding the vaccination, or
 - had a Negative Abattoir 500 status at the time of vaccination.

t) What support is industry offering?

The SA OJD management program is funded from the Sheep Industry Fund under the recommendations made by South Australian Sheep Advisory Group (SASAG). This program is providing assistance to affected producers to undertake testing and best practice management programs to achieve a low risk status while considering individual business needs. The whole sheep industry can access information and advice to

minimise the risks that JD will pose to their business and industry. Providing education and awareness on JD is a key component of the new program and available to the whole industry.

Section 2. Footrot specific questions

a) What changes are being made to the Footrot programs and why?

The development of the modified South Australian Footrot Management Program reflects a change in focus from disease severity (visual foot scoring) to organism virulence.

Footrot is caused by a bacterium that has a spectrum of virulence ranging from virulent to benign, which may express a range of disease severity dependent on environment and host. It is no longer regarded as two different diseases (benign and virulent footrot). Good disease management must aim to prevent the spread of the whole spectrum in all hosts and environment not just where conditions are ideal for severe lesions to occur.

The new program is also aimed at encouraging producers to proactively undertake footrot inspection, testing and carry out effective management programs for all presentations of footrot, not waiting until disease levels are severe. The new program will consist of:

- increased producer education on the role benign lesions play in the spread of more virulent strains of the bacterium.
- all forms of footrot will remain a notifiable disease and must be reported to PIRSA.
- when detected all forms of footrot will be considered to potentially contain virulent strains of footrot until laboratory testing and on-farm inspection indicates bacterium at the benign end of the spectrum are present. Priority for follow up will be for the very virulent strains of the bacterium.
- Saleyard inspections, tracing and neighbour testing will all remain as part of the program.
- While movement restrictions remain in place for very virulent strains of the bacteria, there will be increased opportunity for trade with benign/intermediate strains of the disease.

b) If my sheep flock is diagnosed with Footrot from a disease investigation (Private vet), what will happen?

Producers and private veterinarians are required to report the suspicion of all forms of footrot to PIRSA. Depending on the private vet findings your local PIRSA officer will discuss with you whether a property visit will need to be conducted by PIRSA to assess the virulence of the bacterium. They will also discuss any movement restrictions that may apply.

c) If my sheep flock is detected with Footrot at a South Australian saleyard, what will happen?

When PIRSA Animal Health Officers detect footrot at a saleyard we will determine if there is a suspicion of virulent footrot which will depend on time of the year, severity of lesion, recent property history and climate. Where a PIRSA Animal Health Officer is suspicious of virulent footrot the animals will be restricted to “sale for slaughter” and placarded or returned to the property of origin.

As all strains of footrot can cause benign lesions, the only way to determine if virulent strains may be present is to undertake laboratory testing. All detections of footrot at saleyards will have samples collected for laboratory testing and properties will be informed of their results. Properties with virulent strains will have PIRSA officers undertake property visits. It is an offence under the Livestock Act to move animals with a notifiable disease or bring animals into the state with a notifiable disease and appropriate compliance action will be undertaken. You should not send diseased, lame or sick animals to the saleyard. Contact a PIRSA Animal Health Officer if you are unsure.

d) If my sheep have clinically benign footrot (Scores 1, 2 or 3) and have not been virulence tested, am I still allowed to send them to a saleyard?

You should not send diseased, lame or sick animals to the saleyard. There is opportunity for spread of all forms footrot within the saleyard. If there is only benign lesions that are not active “spreadable” lesions then the risk of spread disease is lower and sending your animals to the saleyard could be permitted. Saleyards and shows may set their own standards of footrot biosecurity so you should always check with the saleyard/show as well. As described above in question c) we cannot determine from benign lesions if virulent strains may be present and action may be taken. It is best to contact your local animal health officer to discuss your case prior to sending your animals to the saleyard to ensure they are suitable.

e) Can I voluntarily get virulence testing done on my flock if I have footrot?

Yes we encourage producers to be proactive in their management of footrot in their flocks, but there may be some limitations on the time of the year and PIRSA staff availability to undertake the sampling. The best time to sample is when there is active infection during spring and sometimes autumn (warm and wet). PIRSA staff need to focus their efforts on the most virulent strains of the disease. Private vets can also collect samples that could be submitted for testing. Contact your local PIRSA Animal Health Officer to discuss having your property inspected for footrot.

f) If my sheep flock is diagnosed with footrot, will my neighbours and people I have sold animals to be notified by PIRSA?

Yes, once a laboratory diagnosis has been completed then we will work with the producer to determine risk for neighbours and people who you have sold animals to. PIRSA’s priority will always be to manage the virulent end of the spectrum first, those with benign strains may not be notified. It is our preference that producers proactively work together to manage footrot within their community, this requires producers to voluntarily disclose their status to their neighbours for all forms of footrot. PIRSA will

provide assistance to local footrot action groups to enable good community management of the disease.

g) If I think sheep on my farm have footrot, where can I get help?

Producers can access disease investigations for flock problems via private veterinarians or report suspicion of footrot directly to PIRSA Animal Health staff. To minimise the economic impact of endemic diseases thorough disease investigations are recommended to ensure an accurate diagnosis and correct treatment/preventative actions are undertaken.

h) My property is currently under quarantine for footrot. What happens to me?

We are changing the way that we undertake the regulated component of the program. Instead of individual orders we will be using the automatic restrictions under the Livestock Act that relate to notifiable diseases. While it is likely that most properties will be released from order there is still some movement restrictions that these producers will have to abide by. Should producers fail to undertake reasonable measures to manage footrot on their property then an individual order under the Livestock Act may be issued. It is recommended that you continue with your current Property Disease Management Plan.

i) If I have footrot, will I still have to notify neighbours when I want to move sheep down the road?

Yes, you should still notify your neighbours, as with any infectious or notifiable disease, it is part of acting in a responsible way to meet your biosecurity obligations to minimise disease risk to your neighbours. Animals should be moved as quickly as possible and not left to graze on the roadside. In general a period of seven days is required to decontaminate the land and minimise risk of transmission.

j) What will be the movement restrictions for footrot infected properties?

Until laboratory testing can be undertaken to support an accurate diagnosis then some interim movement restrictions may need to be in place, your local animal health officer will discuss these with you. Once a diagnosis has been made then movement restrictions will depend on strain virulence - see the table below for some general guidelines. Note: All movements will require a declaration of status on the NSHD

General movement restrictions for footrot cases				
Diagnosis- strain virulence	Sale to slaughter or via feedlot	Sale direct to other producers	Sale via saleyards.	Required to declare virulent footrot on NSHD
Very virulent to virulent Elastase result: 4 to 8 days	Yes	No	No	Yes
Virulent to intermediate Elastase result: 12 days	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Intermediate to benign. Elastase result: 16 to 20+ days	Yes	Yes	Yes	No

k) What testing will be conducted on my sheep?

A scrape or swab of the foot lesions will be taken. This is examined for the presence of *D. nodosus* (the causative bacteria) on a slide and a culture of the swab is undertaken. The bacterium that are cultured will then be tested for virulence using the Elastase test. The Elastase test determines how quickly the strain of bacteria can degrade the Elastin agar plate. The most virulent strains will take 4 to 8 days to degrade the plate while very benign strains may take as long as 20+ days. The whole spectrum of testing can take 3-5 weeks to complete.

l) How do I fill out the National Sheep Health Declaration if PIRSA have not inspected my sheep?

As a producer unless laboratory testing has been done you will need to fill out your NSHD on clinical disease assessment. Your property disease assessment should consider the past 12 months including a spring inspection. If you have any sheep with Score 4 or 5 lesions then you should notify your local PIRSA Animal Health and only sell to feedlots or slaughter until an inspection and laboratory testing is undertaken. Where Score 4 or 5 lesions have occurred you cannot claim to be free of virulent footrot. Where only score 2 or 3 lesions are present then you should contact your local Animal Health Officer who will determine if any further inspections are required. More information on footrot scoring can be found at www.pir.sa.gov.au/biosecurity/animal_health/sheep/health/footrot/causes_and_symptoms

m) What rules will apply to my neighbour with footrot?

Your neighbour will have to declare their status when trading sheep and must ensure they are managing footrot on their property. This can be achieved by undertaking such actions as management practices to minimise the occurrence of disease, only selling sheep to other producers that are not clinically affected with disease or very virulent

strains of footrot, selling diseased animals to abattoirs or feedlots and minimise potential for sheep to stray from the property. An individual property disease management plan will be developed for the producer. The more benign strains of footrot are often not economical or easy to eradicate in certain environments, good management of disease may be the ultimate goal. Should the producer fail to manage disease and be creating a risk then PIRSA officers can issue an order under the Livestock Act requiring actions to be undertaken or restrictions placed.

n) I have a next-door neighbor that I think has footrot and their sheep are regularly straying. What can I do?

As with any disease in sheep, managing your own biosecurity is the best way to manage your risk. Having good quality fencing is essential to footrot management and farm biosecurity. Neighbour fencing is covered under the Fences Act and not a responsibility of PIRSA. However PIRSA Animal Health officers do have powers under the *Livestock Act 1997* that may be used to assist in these sort of situations, where neighbours are negligently allowing animals to stray. Please contact PIRSA to discuss your individual case.

o) How does this affect me buying stock at a saleyard?

Properties that were previously under movement restrictions may now be able to sell their stock but not through saleyards. You must be aware of the health status of the stock you are buying i.e. check the NSHD. It is not sufficient to just check that the animals are from a property where virulent footrot free is not known to occur, you need to determine what evidence this status is based on or what other risk mitigation measures are in place (see sourcing low risk sheep questions s and t below). Producer declarations of disease freedom can be very unreliable as they may not be aware they have virulent strains of footrot or undertaken any form of testing. If you purchase animals from a property with footrot you will by default obtain an infected status on your farm. If you wish to buy at risk, suspect, untested or infected animals, it is up to you to manage the disease and prevent spreading it further, and consequently understand your own trade restrictions.

p) Can I access stock from a flock that has footrot? How does this affect my disease status and what does it mean if I then get the disease?

If you access stock from an infected or suspect flock you will most likely introduce the causative bacterium with them. You need to ensure that you manage the biosecurity risk those animals pose by managing the disease. You must manage the disease in such a way that animal welfare is not compromised i.e. animals are not suffering severe clinical disease, starving, emaciated, dying, etc. Due to the likelihood that animals you introduce will have the bacterium, your property inherits the same or suspect disease status and must be declared on the NSHD in any future trading from your property. You have a biosecurity obligation to act responsibly to minimise the risk of spreading disease.

q) Can I now trade sheep freely with other states?

No. Most other states have restrictions relating to virulent footrot and the definitions do differ in each state. You must check the entry requirements for each state as to how you can undertake trade there.

r) Can I sell sheep from a property that's infected with Footrot?

Yes, see the questions relating to movement restrictions (questions j & q above). You must also declare on the NSHD your property status. Failure to undertake reasonable biosecurity obligations can result in issuing of an order under the *Livestock Act 1997*.

s) How can I be sure that properties are free from footrot infection before buying sheep?

Unfortunately there is a lot of confusion when it comes to properties being free of footrot or virulent strains of footrot and producer declarations may not be accurate. Many producers would not be aware that virulent strains of footrot may be found in benign lesions. It is safest to buy from properties that are free from all forms of footrot. It's even safer to assume that all sheep entering your property may come from a footrot infected property and keep them in an isolation paddock until you can undertake a spring inspection. For animals that cannot be kept isolated i.e. rams you should inspect every foot and not introduce anything with foot lesions.

t) Other than the NSHD how else can I know if I am purchasing "low risk" sheep?

There is very little information regarding footrot on the current NSHD. You will need to make direct contact with the producer to gather more information. Without undertaking testing there is no way to reliably determine if virulent strains of footrot may be present in benign lesions. The environment (rainfall and treatments) will also influence the disease severity that is expressed and a clinical presentation may not be reliable. It is best to try and source sheep from properties that do not have any form of footrot and where the property regularly undertakes spring inspections to ensure disease does not occur. If you are buying from a property that has any form of footrot enquire as to what form of testing they have undertaken to ensure virulent strains are not present. Buying sheep from an environment that is conducive to the expression of footrot i.e. high rainfall may be lower risk than buying from a low rainfall area as the disease is more likely to express to its full potential and be detectable.

u) I think my flock has foot scald, how do I tell if I have Footrot or not?

Footrot and scald are the same thing - interdigital inflammation - caused by the bacterium *Dichelobacter nodosus*. The term scald is used to describe the benign end of the spectrum. Benign strains have similar survival and transmission features to those of virulent strains of the same organism. Benign strains will present exactly the same as virulent strains early in the disease process, where the environment is not ideal for development of lesions or treatments have been undertaken. Even producer claiming to only have scald could have virulent strains of the bacterium present on the property. The only reliable way to determine whether *D. nodosus* is present and how virulent the strain may be is to undertake testing.

- v) **I have a small hobby farm where I run a few sheep. My normal method of selling these animals is in a saleyard. The numbers are too small to sell directly to an abattoir. What marketing options do I have if my sheep have footrot?**

You will be treated the same as any other producer with regards to managing footrot and selling in the saleyard. It is advised you contact a PIRSA Animal Health Officer to assess your footrot situation. It may be possible to arrange for these animals to be kept separate at the saleyards and sold for slaughter only, you would need to contact PIRSA to arrange this prior to the sale. Another alternative may be to sell direct to a local butcher/meatworks.

w) What support is industry offering?

The SA Footrot Management Program is funded from the Sheep Industry Fund under the recommendations made by South Australian Sheep Advisory Group (SASAG). This program is providing assistance to affected producers to undertake testing and best practice management programs to achieve a low risk status while considering individual business needs. The whole sheep industry can access information and advice to minimise the risks that footrot will pose to their business and industry. Providing education and awareness on footrot is a key component of the new program and available to the whole industry.

3. General disease management program questions.

a) What changes are being made to current programs and why?

All PIRSA programs are reviewed regularly to ensure that the most effective and cost efficient solutions can be provided to industry. The changes to the program are occurring due to multiple factors, these include:

- long term trends which affect our operating environment such as new technology and the human resources available for program work. Programs that were effective historically will no longer be suited to the current situation.
- research and developments in science and ways of thinking i.e. increased emphasis on the role of biosecurity on livestock programs, vaccine developments.
- funding and costs of maintaining programs.
- ability to undertake cost effective detection of disease/infectious agent.

Overall there is a change in the programs that is focused on increasing producer awareness and education and the role all producers must play in endemic disease management. See individual program information for specific changes

b) When is change due to come into effect?

Changes will be phased in from July 2018. Further updates will be provided after further consultation with industry and as changes to national programs occur.

c) Will the current National Vendor Declaration (NVD) & National Sheep Health Declaration (NSHD) be valid?

Yes, they are both currently still valid. We are not aware of any reviews due to take place on the NVD but the NSHD will be reviewed shortly, and when a new one is published there will be a requirement to use the latest version.

d) What do I have to change on my NVD?

The changes to the current programs should have no effect on filling out your NVD, continue to fill it out as previously. The information relating to endemic diseases should all be contained on the NSHD.

e) Will the changes affect on-line selling platforms such as Auctions plus?

All sheep movements between properties are required to be accompanied by a NSHD within South Australia regardless of the mechanism of sale. Information on the NSHD should be available on AuctionsPlus so producers can be aware of the disease health status of the animals they wish to purchase. If the relevant information is not available ask for it or do not make the purchase.

f) What does "buyer beware" mean?

Buyer beware means that it is a buyer's responsibility to know what they are buying and be proactive about sourcing the information and performing a risk assessment before purchasing animals.

g) Will there be any education workshops to accompany this process?

Yes, PIRSA are organising several means of communication via email, fact sheets, and roadshows. PIRSA will work with agents, producers, veterinarians, and industry groups (e.g. Livestock SA) to make the transition as smooth as possible. PIRSA Regional Animal Health Officers can be contacted by phone or email. Education opportunities will not only occur when the changes come into effect but continue to run throughout the year to increase producer awareness and understanding of how to prevent and manage disease.

h) Is there an example of how I fill out the relevant boxes on an NVD to know that I am being compliant? Are there any repercussions?

Yes, MLA provide guidelines regarding each section of the NVD:

<https://www.mla.com.au/globalassets/mla-corporate/meat-safety-and-traceability/documents/sheep-and-lamb-sample-nvd-2013.pdf>

If you are unsure how to fill in the form or if you are being compliant, please contact your regional PIRSA office to speak with an Animal Health Officer who can assist you. It is an offence under the *Livestock Act 1997* to provide false or misleading information. Compliance activities including investigations, expiations and prosecutions may be undertaken. Documents such as the NVD are an essential component of livestock traceability and market access, failure to comply with the requirements is considered a serious offence.

i) Will there be trade restrictions for SA with what can cross the Border?

Yes trade restrictions are currently still in place. For movements from South Australia to other states you should always check the current requirements for the state the animals are being sold to. As a general rule our changes do not affect what can leave SA (this is controlled by the state where the sheep are destined) but the changes may impact on what can enter SA.

- **If so what will they be?**

There will be no changes to what can enter SA in relation to footrot – it remains a notifiable disease and as such sheep affected with footrot cannot be brought into SA. In the case of JD, after 1 July 2018 approved vaccinates will be allowed to enter SA with further industry consultation to occur over the next six months to determine what, if any, movement restrictions remain in place.

- **Who will ensure compliance?**

PIRSA undertake a range of activities to detect non-compliance with the Livestock Act. Individual producers are responsible for ensuring that any animals they bring onto their property are healthy and not affected with diseases. Individual producers who have concerns regarding illegal animal movements can report their suspicion to PIRSA.

j) Who will be responsible for monitoring individual producers biosecurity plans

Individual assurance schemes are responsible for monitoring biosecurity plans as described in the program details. In some situations this may be reviewed by private veterinarians (J-BAS) or LPA auditors. The new One Biosecurity program will involve biosecurity plans that are verified by PIRSA staff. It should be noted that many programs recognise each other's biosecurity plans i.e. a biosecurity plan developed on the One Biosecurity platform can be used to meet LPA and J-BAS requirements.

k) Who will be responsible for communicating program changes?

PIRSA will be partnering with Livestock SA and SASAG to develop and implement a communication strategy and continue to review the programs. Initial communications via website, email, fact sheets will be followed up with workshops and further educational material on how producers can best manage the risk of endemic diseases to their property. Livestock agents, producers, veterinarians, and industry groups will all have an opportunity to be involved through this process.