

South Australian Sheep Advisory Group and South Australian Ovine Johne's Disease Committee

Meeting Summary

Friday 19th June 2006

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The meeting commenced at 3:10 pm.

1. Welcome

The Chair welcomed the South Australian Sheep Advisory Group (SASAG), South Australian Ovine Johne's Disease Committee (SA OJDC) members and guests to the meeting. He explained that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss the South Australian OJD project application and a South Australian representative on the OJD Vaccination Working Group.

2. Attendance

<i>Andrew McTaggart (Chair)</i>	<i>Sheep Industry Representative (SASAG)</i>
<i>Janet Hall</i>	<i>Sheep Industry Representative (SASAG)</i>
<i>Geoff Power</i>	<i>Sheep Industry Representative (SASAG)</i>
<i>John Symons</i>	<i>Sheep Industry Representative (SASAG)</i>
<i>Ian Pfeiffer</i>	<i>SA Meat Sheep Societies Representative (SASAG)</i>
<i>Greg Ingham</i>	<i>SAFF Sheep Industry Representative (SASAG)</i>
<i>Michael Pocock</i>	<i>Sheep Industry Representative (SASAG)</i>
<i>Graham Crawford</i>	<i>Sheep Producer Representative (SA OJDC)</i>
<i>Andrew Heinrich</i>	<i>SheepMAP Producer Representative (SA OJDC)</i>
<i>Deb Lehmann</i>	<i>Veterinary Representative (SA OJDC)</i>
<i>Tim Hammat</i>	<i>Sheep Producer Representative (SA OJDC)</i>
<i>Neil Buchanan</i>	<i>Ministerial Representative (PIRSA)</i>
<i>Trudi Goodwin</i>	<i>Executive Officer – Livestock Advisory Groups (PIRSA)</i>

Guests

<i>Jack Van Wijk</i>	<i>Manager, Disease Control (PIRSA)</i>
<i>Elena Petrenas</i>	<i>Manager, Livestock Advisory Groups (PIRSA)</i>

3. Apologies

<i>Francis Andrews</i>	<i>SA Stud Merino Sheepbreeders' Association Representative</i>
<i>John Harris</i>	<i>Sheep Producer Representative (SA OJDC)</i>
<i>Matthew Bekker</i>	<i>SAFF Sheep Industry Representative (SA OJDC)</i>

4. Business

4.1 OJD Project Application

Members noted the OJD progress report within the OJD project application that outlines program objectives according to SA OJD Business Plan and key performance indicators for 2005/06. J. Van Wijk highlighted that the 2006/2007 extension activity (page 5) relates to the re printing of the Sheep Animal Health Statement.

Clarification was sought on the OJD Business Plan, as it was thought that 60% of costs are provided by the National Industry and Commonwealth, 20% by the State Government and 20% from the State Industry.

J. Van Wijk clarified that the 20% from the State Government was a typographic error in the SA OJD Business Plan, which has been corrected, and that in fact the split has always been 20% paid by the Sheep Industry Fund (SIF) and 80% by the National Industry and Commonwealth Government. He further explained that the SA OJD program in 2004/2005 had been funded at 65% from the SIF and 35% by PIRSA. However, this is inconsistent with the Department's public:private ratio for OJD control, which was recommended at 80% private benefit and 20% public benefit. Therefore, the OJD Control Program is being readjusted to adhere to this 80% vs 20% public benefit split.

OUTCOME

Check that the SA OJD Business Plan signed off by the Chair of SASAG and Director of PIRSA has the correction of no State Government contribution for abattoir surveillance as indicated by J. Van Wijk.

Members identified budget errors within the OJD Project application, which are to be corrected and confirmed by SASAG and the SA OJDC.

After extensive consideration, members agreed to continue with the SA OJD plan, while considering the non-compliance of other states and the continuation (and particulars) of the future national program.

RECOMMENDATION

SASAG supports the SA OJD program for the 2006/2007 period for \$1,000,000 on the condition that it is reviewed pending the national program and a corrected project application is circulated.

Abattoir Surveillance Report

J. Van Wijk cited the following abattoir surveillance data for South Australia from the 2005 Animal Health Australia Annual report:

Jan – June 2005

- 1,646 lines of mainland sheep were inspected of which there were 0 infected lines; and
- 161 lines of Kangaroo Island sheep were inspected of which there were 4 infected lines.

July – Dec 2005

- 2,749 lines of mainland sheep were inspected of which there were 0 infected lines; and
- 142 lines of Kangaroo Island sheep were inspected of which there was 1 infected line.

He continued to report that Western Australia experienced a dry year in 2005, with approximately 10,000 sheep moved per month for 5 to 6 months. He cited the following figures recorded at the Ceduna road block and reinforced that the risk to South Australia is minimal as the majority were sent to abattoirs.

- 85% of Western Australian sheep went to the to abattoir;
- 5 -10% went interstate; and
- 5% stayed in South Australia (none of which were from the known high risk area but from the drier cereal belt)

4.2 OJD Vaccination Working Group

Members were advised that Animal Health Australia (AHA) is seeking to have two technical representatives on the National OJD Vaccination Working Group, one essentially representing Victoria, Tasmania and Western Australia and the other South Australia, NSW and Queensland. This request arose in response from pressure from the Sheep Meat Council and Wool Producers to have a small streamlined group with only one representative from OJD affected States: Representation on the working Group includes:

- Sheep Meat Council
- Wool Producers
- Animal Health Committee
- South Australian Farmers Federation
- Victorian Farmers Federation

Concern was raised that only having two representatives could result in two opposing viewpoints on the national OJD control program. It was thought that at the Canberra meeting in March 2006, all states (with the exception of WA) exhibited a preference for individual State representation.

AHA had approached A. McTaggart and proposed that one representative act as the technical representative for South Australia, NSW and Queensland. After considerable discussion, SASAG and SA OJDC members agreed that a representative (in addition to the SAFF member) from South Australia should be on the Group (thereby rejecting the AHA proposal). It was recommended that the Chair of the OJD Committee (D. Lehmann) act as the South Australian representative.

RECOMMENDATION

SASAG and the SA OJD Committee recommend for South Australia to have a technical advisory representative on the OJD Vaccination Working Group, with D. Lehman initially to act in this role.

OJD Vaccination Points

Concern was raised that South Australia could become a dumping ground for 'at risk' unvaccinated sheep from Western Australia (score 3). These sheep could be exposed to higher risk environment (score 1), and there is a risk that these unvaccinated sheep may be retained for breeding.

Previously the OJD Committee had suggested that South Australia should support approved vaccinates from 'low risk' (undetected) flocks (in low risk areas) being eligible for additional points (if approved nationally by OJD TAG). It was not confirmed that this recommendation of increased weighting of the ABC was supported by SASAG.

J. Van Wick had reservations about this concept as it could encourage the movement of 'high risk' sheep into South Australia from outside of the approved six Victorian shires. He explained that Victoria is in a 'higher risk' area of the epidemiology curve and the control measures will have minimal impact on OJD control in the short to medium term. This would mean that score 3 sheep from Victoria with two additional points for vaccine (with undetected infection) could be sold freely within South Australia as score 5.

OUTCOME

Investigate SASAG minutes to determine whether SASAG supported the SA OJDC recommendation for 'low risk' (undetected) flocks to receive additional vaccination points on the Sheep Health Statement.

5. Other Business

5.1 OJD Bio-economic Model Presentation

The OJD Bio-economic Model was presented prior to the meeting by Evan Sergeant (AusVet Animal Health Services) to SASAG and OJDC members, along with guests.

The modelling showed that the current control program was highly effective in controlling the disease with a small increase from current disease levels to 4.9% infected flocks over 30 years. The only comparative scenario that had a similar Net Present Value to the current program (option 1) was the Voluntary Vaccination (option 3), however the prevalence of the disease increased to 33.5% of flocks infected after 30 years (see 6.1.1 page 13). With a modification of option 3 using the slower modelling of the Voluntary Vaccination scenario, the prevalence of the disease increases to 30.2% of flocks infected after 30 years (see 6.2.1 page 16)

OUTCOME

PIRSA Animal Health, along with the SA OJDC will further examine the South Australian Model with a view to making a recommendation to SASAG.

The meeting closed at 4:17 pm