

Merino Matters



Responsibilities for Live Export Preparation of Sheep

WHEN arranging for sheep to be sent for live export the following areas need to be considered in terms of the impact on your planning and responsibilities.

Transportation

The producer has an obligation to only transport animals that are in a fit condition for the journey. A producer may be in breach of the Animal Welfare Act 2002 if they fail to do so. Animals that are stressed, can't load bear their own weight equally on all legs or sheep with pre-existing painful conditions are not considered fit to load. To ensure correct selection, handling, feed and water requirements to meet your obligations under the Act, refer to the 'Fit to Load Guidelines' available on the mla website www.mla.com.au

Animal Health

Scabby Mouth is a significant disease for live export. The disease can occur in sheep of any age but is most common in lambs and weaners over summer.

Signs – usually occur about three days after infection.

Symptoms include raised scabs with a red ulcerated area underneath the scab around the:

- Lips, muzzle and nostrils (most common)
- Eyes, feet, lower leg, anus, vulva, udder, scrotum and pizzle (less common)

Prevention - Vaccinate all lambs in the mob at the same time and observe good hygiene practises. Accidental self injection may cause a reaction. Refer to the manufacturer's recommendations carefully as correct vaccination technique is important for development of protective immunity. Immunity following vaccination develops within two weeks. For more information on the disease and when to vaccinate refer to the DAFWA website www.agric.wa.gov.au/livestock-biosecurity/scabby-mouth-sheep

Withholding periods

Remember that there are withholding periods for most animal health treatments which will need to be adhered to when preparing sheep for live export. These include backlining, flystrike treatment and drenching. Please read the manufacturer's instructions carefully as different products may have different withholding periods.

Documentation

Movement of sheep – Sheep must be tagged with an NLIS approved tag and the producer must complete a NVD. Refer to the www.agric.wa.gov.au or www.nlis.com.au websites for your obligations.



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