

MEDIA RELEASE

Buyer beware when purchasing new stock

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Peak woolgrower representative body, WoolProducers Australia (WoolProducers), is urging sheep producers who are purchasing stock to ensure the biosecurity credentials of the animals before receipt.

Purchasing new livestock is one of the highest risk activities for introducing disease, pests or parasites into your flock and with the favourable change in season in large parts of eastern Australia, many producers are in the process of restocking.

WoolProducers President, Mr Ed Storey said, "With current low flock numbers, both at a national and property level due to the recent drought in large parts of sheep producing country, we are seeing sheep purchases occurring across regional and state lines".

"It is therefore essential that purchasers are confident of the biosecurity risk profile of the sheep that they are buying in. The Sheep Health Declaration (SHD) is one tool that can assist in determining this risk, so be sure to ask the vendor for one before purchase."

By managing biosecurity decisions at this crucial time there is minimised risk and maximised opportunity for profitability. Endemic diseases and parasites can have a long and expensive impact on sheep flocks once established.

The recent change in seasonal conditions also sees the increased risk of severe endemic conditions rise.

Mr Storey said, "Quarantining any incoming sheep for a reasonable amount of time to observe any symptoms such as lameness is also important".

"We are hearing anecdotally of an increase in virulent footrot cases being found, so it is incumbent that purchasers are not introducing unwanted problems into their flock."

Vendors are also reminded that they need to fill in the SHD correctly as there is legal significance when signing this document.

"Flock health history, location, testing previously undertaken and vaccination history are vital pieces of information in making risk-based purchases and should be provided to buyers." Mr Storey said.

A copy of the Sheep Health Declaration is available here: https://www.farmbiosecurity.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/National-Sheep-Health-Declaration_fillable.pdf

ENDS

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About WoolProducers' Australia

WPA plays a critical role in working closely with companies and entities funded by woolgrower funds including compulsory levies or fees for service.

Its mission is to develop constructive and profitable outcomes for woolgrowers nationally.

The agency is responsible for appointing a director to each of the Australian Wool Exchange and the Australia Wool Testing Authority, promoting good corporate governance and ensuring that the interests of growers are met.

WPA maintains a working relationship with Australian Wool Innovation as the voice of woolgrower shareholders. It aims to contribute to AWI's programs for the benefit of growers, promoting responsible use of levy funds and ensuring good corporate governance.

WPA is the sole wool industry member of Animal Health Australia, and as such, carries a significant responsibility for decision making on behalf of the industry in the event of an emergency animal disease outbreak.

As the only wool grower organisation with membership of the National Farmers' Federation, WoolProducers is responsible for providing key policy advice on behalf of our members, and other wool growers, to Australia's peak farm body.

WoolProducers also works closely with the Federal Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment on key issues such as animal health and welfare, biosecurity, pest management control, natural resource management, drought preparedness, emergency animal disease outbreak preparedness and industry development, including research and trade.