



Department of
**Primary Industries and
Regional Development**

GOVERNMENT OF
WESTERN AUSTRALIA



Hello, have you seen any new cases of illness in your sheep in the last fortnight?
Reply Y or N

From the Sheep Surveillance Network. To opt out reply STOP

Esperance Surveillance Network offers up-to-date information on local animal health

Sheep producers in the shires of Esperance and Ravensthorpe in Western Australia have the opportunity to join a surveillance network for sheep health that uses a simple SMS system.

The network aims to provide members with up-to-date information about health issues occurring in sheep in the region, while also strengthening WA's ability to detect new, emerging or exotic diseases more rapidly.

Benefits for network members

Members will receive a monthly surveillance report for the region, which will include:

- which disease syndromes have been occurring most commonly
- what is likely to be causing them, and
- what you can do about them.

These reports will allow members to make informed on-farm decisions that improve animal health and production.

Members will also benefit from:

- a strengthened animal health surveillance system that protects our sheep industry and market access
- regular contact with local Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) vets
- increased knowledge of subsidies available for disease investigations.

If the network reports show that members are commonly reporting particular health issues, this may highlight areas that could benefit from future research.

The network also has the ability to send members a warning SMS for disease outbreaks.

Animal health surveillance in WA

WA's Goldfields-Esperance region produces quality livestock for consumers across the globe. WA's animal health surveillance system helps to prove that our livestock are free from diseases and residues that could harm human health or damage our ability to sell livestock within Australia and overseas. The Esperance Sheep Surveillance Network is designed to strengthen this system.

The network allows producers to share information across the region to strengthen disease surveillance and production as a whole. Monthly reports from the network will help producers make informed decisions about animal health on-farm.

How the network operates

Network members will participate in a short series of SMS texts each fortnight asking if they have seen any new signs of illness in their sheep. A single letter yes (Y) or no (N) response by SMS is all that is required. Any member who responds Y will receive two more messages, asking what signs of illness they have observed and how many animals were affected.

Any member can request a call from their local DPIRD vet to discuss their sheep health queries. Anyone with significant reports will receive a phone call to discuss the case and see what assistance DPIRD can provide. This might include services such as subsidised disease investigations and post-mortem sampling to try to obtain a definite diagnosis.

The network does not replace timely discussion with your vet. For all veterinary emergencies, please contact your private vet, or if you suspect an emergency animal disease (EAD), call the EAD hotline on 1800 675 888.

Early investigation and diagnosis of diseases that occur on-farm can provide producers with information to help minimise production losses during the outbreak and guide future management practices to prevent the problem from occurring again.

The network will run until March 2022 unless otherwise indicated.

How do I join the network?

Only sheep producers in the shires of Esperance and Ravensthorpe are eligible to join the network for this project.

To join, email or post a completed registration form to:

- Taneeke Marsden, DPIRD,
PMB 50 Melijinup Road
Esperance WA 6450
taneeke.marsden@dpiird.wa.gov.au

More information

Visit agric.wa.gov.au/sms-livestock-surveillance

or contact:

Taneeke Marsden
DPIRD biosecurity officer
Phone: +61 (0)8 9083 1103
Email:
taneeke.marsden@dpiird.wa.gov.au

Example of Esperance Sheep Surveillance Network fortnightly SMS

Hello, have you seen any new cases of illness in your sheep in the last fortnight?
Reply Y or N

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Did you see (can select multiple):
A) Sudden death
B) Abortions; stillbirths
C) Weakness
D) Lameness
E) Diarrhoea; scouring
F) Ill thrift
G) Neurological signs
H) Infertility
I) Mastitis
J) Respiratory signs
K) Skin lesions
L) Salivating; mouth sores
M) Rapid weight loss
O) Other

How many animals were affected/
total animals in each mob affected?

E.g. for two mobs affected - 1/100
5/620 (if more than one sign
selected indicate the numbers
followed by the letter eg 1/100 A
5/620 D)

Y

10/700 A 1/120 G

Thank you for your contribution to
livestock health in WA.

If you would like a DPIRD
veterinarian to contact you please
reply with your best contact
number.

0123456789

AG

Important disclaimer

The Chief Executive Officer of the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development and the State of Western Australia accept no liability whatsoever by reason of negligence or otherwise arising from the use or release of this information or any part of it.

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