

BIOSECURITY FOR PRODUCERS AGISTING OR LEASING



WOOLPRODUCERS AUSTRALIA



Producers agisting sheep or other livestock, leasing a block or making their land available for others to run livestock should consider their biosecurity risks when entering into an agreement. This is particularly important for managing animal health and maintaining certification for voluntary risk programs like the Ovine Brucellosis Accreditation Scheme. Below are some tips to remember before any stock are moved.

Conduct a pre-agreement inspection

Producers should conduct an inspection of the property that they are agisting their livestock on or leasing. Ideally this should be done in person by the producer, or by a trusted representative sent to inspect the property (such as a stock agent), and can include the following:

- Ensure the property has a current property identification code (PIC).
- Inspect infrastructure to ensure it is fit for purpose. This includes fencing, yards and livestock handling facilities.
- Enquire about contaminated sites or potential chemical exposure. Managing chemical residues is one of your obligations under the Livestock Production Assurance program (LPA) and when using National Vendor



Declarations (NVDs). For more information on contaminated sites contact your relevant state department.

- Assess the property for weeds harmful to sheep. Have a plan to prevent weeds being introduced to your property when sheep return from agisting.
- Assess the availability and quality of the water. Conduct testing if you have concerns.
- Consider any other livestock on the property and assess the risk of disease that could arise from contact between different herds or flocks.

Prepare a written agreement

In the event of a dispute, your written agreement is your greatest ally. This document should define:

- Who is responsible for the health of the sheep, including any procedures to be followed in the event of an emergency animal disease outbreak and natural disaster.
- Who is responsible¹ for updating the National Livestock Identification System (NLIS) database. Generally the receiver of livestock is responsible for recording the movement on the NLIS Database, however when there is no change in ownership the owner of the sheep is ultimately responsible.
- Who is responsible for supplying NLIS tags or devices for any livestock born on the property or who lose their identification.
- Agreed minimum biosecurity requirements, including documentation, quarantine periods, and disease and parasite treatments.

¹ www.integritysystems.com.au/identification--traceability/buying-selling-moving



Sending sheep to the agistment or leased block

- Prepare a National Sheep Health Declaration² and NVD and provide this to the landowner.
- Prepare NLIS movement documents. If sheep are being transported interstate, check with the destination state or territory to ensure the sheep meet entry requirements and are accompanied by the appropriate documentation.
- If the landowner is LPA accredited, all sheep introduced on to or dispatched from the PIC must be accompanied by an approved NLIS movement document (i.e. NVD or waybill), which must be kept with the landowner's records for a minimum of three years (or in accordance with statutory requirements or for the duration of livestock on a PIC, whichever is the longest period).
- Contact local government veterinarians at the destination to discuss potential disease risks present in the area.
- Ensure sheep are fit to travel in accordance with the Fit to Load Guidelines.³
- Ensure the movement of sheep from your property to the agistment/lease property has been entered into the NLIS database within 48 hours post movement.



Returning sheep to their home property

- Isolate returning sheep from other animals. If you can't use a dedicated quarantine yard, consider confining sheep to a smaller, secure paddock. Isolation times depend on the conditions or weeds being managed. The recommended quarantine period is 21 days, however longer quarantine periods may be beneficial, for more information contact your relevant state department.
- Treat sheep for internal and external parasites and monitor closely for signs of disease whilst in isolation.
- Monitor for germination of new weeds in the isolation yard/paddock. Returning sheep will

empty out weed seeds whilst in isolation, minimising their spread to the broader property.

- Ensure the movement of sheep back to your property has been entered into the NLIS database and sheep travel with an approved NLIS movement document.

LPA requirements

All LPA accredited PIC's must comply with the LPA Rules and Standards⁴, which includes having a property biosecurity plan. For LPA accredited producers who are agisting stock or leasing country, there are two options:

1 If the landowner is also LPA accredited (and therefore has a PIC registered with the LPA program) the agistee/lessee can be supplied with the landowners NVDs for moving animals off the property for sale, slaughter or to another property. It is then the landowner's responsibility to meet LPA standards, including having a property biosecurity plan. This plan should include any agisted livestock as part of its risk management.

2 The agistee/lessee can obtain their own, separate LPA accreditation for the existing PIC, and access their own NVDs for that PIC. This additional LPA account in the agistees/lessee's name is then also subject to the LPA standards and is auditable. The agistee/lessee will need to have their own biosecurity plan for this property. This option will likely be most suitable for long-term lease agreements, where the lessee is managing the entire property, or where the landowner is not LPA accredited. For an agistee/lessee to access an existing LPA account or create their own LPA account, a third party authorisation form will need to be completed and returned to LPA administration. Call the LPA hotline on 1800 683 111 or email lpa@mla.com.au

2 www.farmbiosecurity.com.au/toolkit/declarations

3 www.mla.com.au/research-and-development/animal-health-welfare-andbiosecurity/transportation

4 www.mla.com.au/meat-safety-and-traceability/red-meat-integrity-system/about-the-livestock-production-assurance-program/lpa-rules--standards