

## SUBMISSION FOR SHEEP STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES – DI EVANS BSC BVMS

### **A. GENERAL COMMENTS**

- a) It is recognised that many Standards are described as ‘outcome based’, resulting in confusion and misunderstanding, as well as posing difficulties for prosecution. These need to be revised and modified accordingly.
- b) Where a high welfare risk is known to be associated with specific practices and these have been described as Guidelines, it is recommended that these become Standards.
- c) Under Principles for sheep welfare on page 7, expand 4<sup>th</sup> dot point to include the words ‘including walking freely’.
- d) The process following the closure of the public submissions to finalise the S&G document should be described.
- e) Unless indicated (modify, delete or provide as additional), all other standards and recommendations are supported.

### **B. SECTIONS**

#### **1. Responsibilities**

Standard & Guidelines supported

#### **2. Feed and water**

**Objective:** MODIFY

Sheep have access to INSERT ‘APPROPRIATE’ feed and water to ~~minimize the risk to their welfare~~ INSERT ‘PREVENT HUNGER AND THIRST, AND TO MEET PHYSIOLOGICAL REQUIREMENTS’.

**Standards:**

S2.1 REPLACE WITH MODIFIED G2.1

Sheep ~~should~~ MUST have access to INSERT ‘APPROPRIATE’ feed and water daily, except where management practices such as shearing, preparation for sale, transport, slaughter and drenching, result in a longer period of water deprivation, to a maximum of 36 hours.

#### **Additional Standard**

A person in charge must ensure that sheep are not less than body condition score of 1.5 (using a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being very emaciated and 5 being very fat)

**Guidelines:**

G2.1 USED TO REPLACE S2.1

#### **3. Risk Management of extreme weather, natural disasters, disease, injury and predation**

**Standards:**

### S3.1 MODIFY

A person must take REPLACE reasonable with APPROPRIATE actions to ensure the welfare of sheep to threats, including extremes of weather, drought, fires, floods, disease, and predation.

### S3.3 MODIFY

A person in charge must ensure \*appropriate\* treatment for sick, injured, INSERT DISTRESSED, or diseased sheep REMOVE AT THE FIRST REASONABLE OPPORTUNITY.

#### **Additional Standards converted from Guidelines**

(Was G3.3) A person in charge must ensure that sheep that appear to be isolated from the flock, caught in structures or bogged are inspected immediately and appropriate action taken.

(Was G3.5) A person in charge must ensure that sheep being fed in a drought situation are carefully observed at least weekly.

(Was G3.6) A person in charge must ensure that sheep and lambs are provided with adequate shelter. In the absence of natural protection, ~~consideration should be given to~~ INSERT 'THIS MAY INCLUDE' the provision of shade, windbreaks or sheds.

(Was G3.7) A person in charge must ensure that shorn sheep are given protection during cold conditions and sudden weather changes.

(Was 3.10) Predator control programs MUST be implemented where predation is a risk to the welfare of sheep.

(Was 3.12) Unexplained disease or deaths MUST be investigated to formulate appropriate remedial and preventive actions.

(Was 3.14) A person must ensure that all treatments and vaccines are administered in accordance with directions and records of treatments must be kept.

#### **Guidelines:**

G3.3, G3.5, G3.6, G3.7, G3.10, G3.12, G3.14 - CONVERT TO ADDITIONAL STANDARD  
G3.16 Add dot point – 'REGULAR INSPECTION'

## **4. Facilities and equipment**

#### **Additional Standards converted from Guidelines**

(Was G4.2) A person in charge must ensure that shade is provided in hot weather in outdoor pens, where sheep are penned for extended periods.

(Was G4.3) A person in charge must ensure that floor surfaces is nonslip, nonabrasive and free-draining. Concrete is only recommended for high-traffic areas.

(Was G4.4) A person in charge must ensure that facilities are free from protrusions and obstacles that may cause injury.

## **5. Handling and husbandry**

#### **Standards:**

S5.1 MODIFY

DELETE 'IN AN UNREASONABLE MANNER' AFTER STRIKE.

S5.2 MODIFY

A person in charge of a dog that DELETE 'HABITUALLY' bites sheep OR make mandatory that all dogs must be muzzled when working sheep.

S5.4 MODIFY

Electric prodders MUST not be used on sheep.

S5.7 MODIFY

A person in charge MUST not tether sheep.

**Additional Standards converted from Guidelines**

(Was G5.2) A person in charge must ensure that extra care is taken when handling sheep with special needs including young lambs, heavily pregnant ewes, lame sheep and rams.

(Was G5.7) A person in charge must ensure that overcrowding of sheep in pens or yards does not occur and that precautions are taken to prevent smothering, especially of lambs and weaners.

(Was G5.15) A person must ensure that horn trimming does not damage soft tissue.

(Was G5.17) A person in charge must ensure that sheep fitted with nets or coats are inspected regularly to ensure that they do not become tangled, cast or adversely affected by grass seeds.

(Was G5.19) A person must ensure that care is taken when shearing and crutching to minimize cuts, and severe cuts must be treated appropriately.

(Was G5.20 LAST DOT POINT) A person in charge must ensure that appropriate and adequate feed and water is available to newly shorn sheep.

(Was G5.21) A person in charge must ensure that rams that are sedated for shearing or crutching are managed to prevent exposure, sunburn and smothering in accordance with the directions of the prescribing veterinarian.

(Was G5.22) A person in charge must ensure that sheep that grow and retain long wool are shorn annually.

**Additional Standard**

A person in charge must ensure that wool is removed from the face of a sheep, if the sheep is unable to see.

**Guidelines:**

G5.20 MODIFY

Remove last dot point (as converted to S5.14)

**6. Tail docking and castration**

**Standards:**

## S6.2 MODIFY

A person must not tail dock sheep without using pain relief.

## S6.3 MODIFY (INCORPORATE G6.19)

A person must DOCK THE TAIL THROUGH THE JOINT SPACE and leave a docked tail stump of a sheep with at least two \*palpable free joints\* remaining.

## S6.4 MODIFY

A person must not castrate or use the cryptorchid method on sheep without using pain relief and haemorrhage control.

### **Additional Standards converted from Guidelines**

(Was G6.2) A person MUST NOT tail dock or castrate a lamb less than 24 hours old.

(Was G6.8) A person must ensure that lambs are appropriately restrained in a lamb cradle and, must be released to land on their feet to avoid contact of the wound (s) with the ground.

(Was G6.10) A person when castrating or tail docking sheep must ensure that haemorrhage is minimised by selecting an appropriate method, preventing overheating of lambs and allowing them to settle after mustering.

(Was G6.11) A person must ensure that tail docking and castration are not undertaken during extreme weather.

(Was G6.13) A person in charge must ensure that sheep are inspected daily and with minimal disturbance for signs of post-operative complications during the healing process, and \*appropriate\* action taken.

(Was G6.16) A person must not muster and yard lambs until wounds are healed.

(Was G6.18) A person using a hot knife must ensure that it is operated at the recommended temperature.

(Was G6.21) A person must not dock the tail for cosmetic reasons or on fat-tail sheep breeds.

### **Guidelines:**

#### G6.3 MODIFY

Lambs should be tail docked, castrated or made cryptorchid no younger than two weeks old.

G6.19 REMOVE AS INCORPORATED INTO S6.2

## **7. Mulesing**

### **Objective:** MODIFY

In circumstances where mulesing is necessary for the long-term welfare of the sheep INSERT *'and non-surgical alternatives cannot be implemented'*, it is done in a manner that minimises the impact of the procedure.

### **Standards:**

#### S7.1 MODIFY

Only accredited operators who have the relevant knowledge, experience and skills are to perform mulesing on sheep.

#### S7.2 MODIFY

A person must not mules sheep that are less than 24 hours old or more than 12 weeks old.

#### S7.3 MODIFY

A person must not mules any sheep without using pain relief.

#### S7.5 MODIFY

A person mulesing sheep must only remove INSERT 'SUFFICIENT WOOL-BEARING SKIN APPROPRIATE TO THE CONFORMATION OF THE LAMB BEING TREATED TO ACHIEVE FLYSTRIKE PROTECTION'.

NOTE: This amalgamates G7.5.

### **Additional Standards converted from Guidelines**

(Was G7.1) Before permitting mulesing to be undertaken, the owner of the sheep must demonstrate that other options for breech strike prevention have been considered including (as per G7.1);

- Selection for resistant conformation
- Culling susceptible sheep
- Clips
- Crutching
- Timing of shearing
- Chemicals for flystrike prevention
- Internal parasite control

(Was G7.7) A person in charge must only allow mulesing when there are no alternatives and the procedure results in:

- Benefits to life-time sheep welfare
- Better flock management
- A reduced work (occupational) health and safety risk.

(Was G7.9) A person in charge must ensure that the risk of infection is minimized through good hygiene practices in relation to facilities, hands, handling and instruments.

(Was G7.12) A person in charge must ensure that lambs are appropriately restrained in a lamb cradle and must be released in a manner that ensures they land on their feet to avoid contact of the wound with the ground.

(Was G7.17) A person in charge must ensure that sheep are inspected regularly and with minimal disturbance for signs of post-operative complications during the healing process, and appropriate action taken.

(Was G7.18) After placement in paddocks, a person must not forcibly muster and yard lambs until mulesing wounds are healed.

(Was G7.20) A person must not perform mulesing during extreme weather.

## **Guidelines**

G7.5 RECOMMEND TO AMALGAMATE WITH S7.5

G7.6 MODIFY (as maximum permitted age is recommended to be 12 weeks)  
Where mulesing is performed, lambs should be at least 2 weeks of age.

G7.8 REMOVE - RECOMMENDED AS A STANDARD

## **8. Breeding management**

### **Standards:**

S8.1 MODIFY

A person performing artificial breeding procedures on sheep must TAKE APPROPRIATE ACTION TO MINIMISE PAIN, DISTRESS OR INJURY TO SHEEP.

S8.2 MODIFY

A person must be a veterinarian to perform surgical embryo transfer and laparoscopic insemination of sheep.

### **Additional Standards converted from Guidelines**

(Was G8.1) Technicians responsible for breeding management MUST BE ACCREDITED and have an understanding of the reproduction and behavior of both the ewe and the ram.

(Was G8.3) A person in charge must ensure that in the last 4-6 weeks of pregnancy, management practices minimize stress on ewes to reduce pregnancy toxemia and other metabolic diseases.

(Was G8.4) A person in charge must ensure that lambing ewes are monitored, and disturbed as little as possible.

(Was G8.5) A person in charge must ENSURE that ewes affected by severe injuries or lambing complications (prolapsed uterus, dystocia) receive urgent treatment or be humanely killed without delay.

(Was G8.6) A person in charge must ensure that lambing ewes are placed in a sheltered paddock with APPROPRIATE FEED, when there is a risk of cold, wet or windy weather.

(Was G8.7) A person in charge must ensure that predators are controlled before and during lambing.

(Was G8.9) A person in charge must ensure that weak or orphaned lambs with very little chance of survival MUST be humanely killed.

(Was G8.14) Laparoscopic artificial insemination and embryo transfer MUST be done using sedation, analgesia and aseptic technique.

### **Additional Standard**

A person must not use electro-ejaculation to obtain semen from rams.

## **Guidelines**

G8.12 DELETE as S8.2 prohibits non-veterinarians from conducting artificial breeding techniques.

G8.13 DELETE as S8.11 prohibits use of electro-ejaculation for semen collection.

## **9. Intensive sheep production systems**

### **Standards:**

#### **S9.1 MODIFY**

A person in charge must ensure that feed is available daily to sheep in intensive production systems. MAKE WATER ACCESS SEPARATE STANDARD – S9.8.

#### **S9.3 MODIFY**

A person must take INSERT 'APPROPRIATE' action where sheep have not adapted to an intensive production system.

#### **S9.6 MODIFY**

A person in charge must ensure sufficient space to allow all sheep to lie on their sternums INSERT 'WITH LEGS OUTSTRETCHED AND WITHOUT TOUCHING EACH OTHER' at the same time in an intensive production system.

S9.7 Single penning of sheep for commercial production is not permitted.

### **Additional Standards converted from Guidelines**

(Was G9.1) A person in charge must ensure that drinking equipment MUST be inspected regularly and maintained to ensure its correct operation, and that pipes, taps and ball valves are not blocked.

(Was G9.2) A person in charge must ensure that water troughs are cleaned as required to prevent contamination.

(Was G9.3) A person in charge must ensure that feed troughs are cleaned as required to prevent faecal contamination and build-up of stale and spoiled feed and dust.

(Was G9.4) A person in charge must ensure that trough space is adequate for the feeding system to allow the daily intake of feed and water, and to minimize bullying and shy feeders.

(Was G9.6) A person in charge must ensure that the diet provided IN INTENSIVE PRODUCTION SYSTEMS promotes rumination.

(Was G9.7) A person in charge must ensure that the sheep in intensive wool production systems MUST be maintained at or above a body condition or fat score or two out of five (five is fattest).

(Was G9.13) A person in charge must ensure that lighting in indoor systems is adequate to allow inspection of all sheep.

(Was G9.15) A person in charge must ensure that APPROPRIATE ACTION IS TAKEN TO alleviate wool biting and other stereotypic behaviours shown by sheep in intensive production systems.

(Was G9.16) A person in charge must ensure that prior to entry into an intensive system are inspected for disease and injury and appropriate treatment undertaken.

(Was G9.17) A person in charge must ensure that a biosecurity plan is in place for introduction of sheep into an intensive production system.

(Was G9.18) A person in charge must ensure that hospital pens are used for sick or injured sheep in intensive production systems.

(Was G9.19) A person in charge must ensure that dead sheep are removed promptly in intensive production systems.

(Was G9.25) A person in charge must ensure that shade and shelter is provided to prevent heat and cold stress IN INTENSIVE PRODUCTION SYSTEMS.

(Was G9.26) A person in charge must ensure that all ventilation equipment is checked regularly to ensure it is fully operational.

(Was G9.27) A person in charge must ensure that indoor housing systems with controlled or forced ventilation that rely on automatic equipment is inspected daily, or have a back-up systems to warn of mechanical failure.

(Was G9.30) A person in charge must ensure that fire alarms and adequate fire fighting equipment is fitted and maintained in all indoor housing systems.

#### **Additional Standards**

A person in charge must ensure that appropriate bedding is provided and maintained in a hygienic state where sheep are penned for more than 10 days and there is a risk to welfare including abrasions and cellulitis.

A person in charge must ensure that water is constantly available to sheep in intensive production systems.

A person in charge must be ensure that sheep in intensive production systems are inspected daily.

#### **Guidelines**

G9.7 & G9.14 NOT SUPPORTED. RECOMMEND NEW STANDARD.

### **10. Humane killing**

#### **Standards:**

##### S10.4 MODIFY

A person killing sheep must ~~take reasonable action to~~ confirm the sheep is dead.

##### S10.5 MODIFY

A person killing a lamb by a blow to the forehead must ensure that the lamb weighs less than 10kilograms AND MUST BE DONE BY A SINGLE, SHARP BLOW DELIVERED TO THE CENTRE OF THE FOREHEAD.

#### **Additional Standards converted from Guidelines**

(Was G10.3) A person killing a lamb by a blow to the forehead must ensure that the lamb weighs less than 10kilograms AND MUST BE DONE BY A SINGLE, SHARP BLOW DELIVERED TO THE CENTRE OF THE FOREHEAD.