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OJD in Western Australia

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OJD in Western Australia


- What is OJD and what does it do?
- How does OJD spread?
- What is my risk?
- What impact will the disease have:
 1. On my property
 2. On my ability to trade
- What can I do to manage the risk?

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- What is OJD and what does it do?
 - Caused by *Mycobacterium paratuberculosis subsp avium*
 - Sheep contract the disease (generally in the first year of life) from grazing pasture contaminated with the bacteria
 - Sheep once infected with OJD remain infected for life
 - No treatment
 - After some years, causes chronic weight loss despite adequate feed, and eventually death.
 - Scouring not common (unlike cattle)



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- On farm:
 - Sheep deaths despite adequate feed and worm control
 - Tail in otherwise healthy mob
 - Most often 3-4 year old animals
 - Deaths occur within 4 weeks – 2 months of first signs
 - Deaths occur all year round (no epidemics)
 - Often associated with an imposed stress (lambing, end of summer)

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- How does OJD spread?
 - Most commonly comes in with apparently healthy but infected sheep
 - Some lateral spread from infected neighbours (water movement)
 - Stray sheep from an infected neighbour (may not know they are infected)



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What is my risk?

Your risk is **increased** if:

- You are in a higher rainfall area
- You trade sheep
- You have an infected neighbour
- You have common water catchments

Your risk is **reduced (but not eliminated)** if:

- You run a closed flock or only buy low risk sheep
- You are in a lower rainfall zone or the wheat/sheep zone
- Your flock is vaccinated

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How is OJD Diagnosed?

- Post mortem cases with clinical signs – local DVO, private veterinarian
- Abattoir monitoring
- Faecal culture
- Faecal PCR test
- Test the FLOCK not the individual

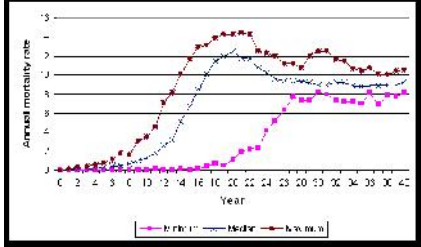




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What impact will the disease have?

- On farm:
- Death rates of 10-15% per annum have been reported



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Sub clinical losses have not been quantified but probably occur:

1. Reduced fertility
2. Reduced wool clip
3. Reduced live weight gain?
4. Carcass value impacts at abattoir



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Ability to trade:

- DAFWA does not impose quarantine or enforce destocking in newly diagnosed cases
- National Sheep Health Statement is not mandatory
- However it is AN OFFENCE to knowingly sell diseased animals (any disease) under Trade Practices legislation.
- No impact on sales direct to abattoir (no public health or food safety issues)
- Cull mutton?

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What can I do to manage the risk?

- Depends on where you are...
- **Low Risk Areas:**
 1. Run a closed flock if possible
 2. If you buy, buy low risk sheep
 3. Fence off common watercourses
 4. Manage strays promptly
 5. Discuss with the neighbours and agree a joint approach (including early notification if the worst happens)
 6. Monitor the situation – abattoir monitoring, post mortems
 7. Early diagnosis = minimising the impact

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- **High Risk Areas**
- All of the previous slide!
- **Seriously consider vaccination**
- **High risk enterprises: vaccinate.**



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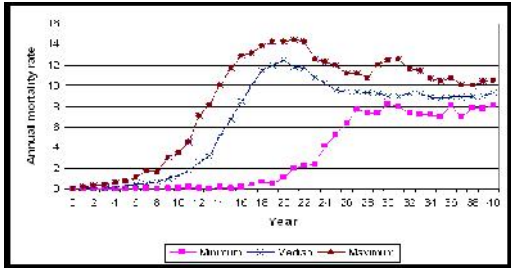
Vaccination:

- Only one licensed product – Gudair
- Given as lambs (before 16 weeks of age)
- One shot for life
- Approved vaccinates should have a V in a circle on their NLIS approved ear tag
- Practice correct vaccination technique
- Avoid self injection



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- Don't wait too long to vaccinate...



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QUESTIONS?



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Thank you

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