

STOCKLIVE

Sheep Language



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Introduction

This document outlines the standard language used across the StockLive platform when describing sheep during commercial auctions. It provides consistent and shared terminology for assessors, vendors, and buyers to present and interpret information about livestock accurately.

The terminology has been developed in line with the industry language set by Meat & Livestock Australia (MLA) and compiled by third-party industry expert Sally Martin, SheepMetriX, to ensure accuracy, relevance, and consistency across all listings and assessments.

This information specifically addresses sheep. It is important to note that sheep referred to in this manual are bred and raised solely for meat and wool production; dairy sheep have not been included at this stage.

Content developed by Sally Martin, SheepMetriX, 2025

Transport, Welfare & Chain of Responsibility

Transport and welfare considerations are essential aspects of responsible livestock management, ensuring that animals are treated humanely, safely, and in compliance with established guidelines and regulations. While it is not the primary responsibility of the assessor, it is crucial that they possess a thorough understanding and working knowledge of relevant state and federal legislation. This knowledge enables the assessor to provide sound, informed advice during the assessment and preparation of livestock for sale.

The following are important resource materials on standards and guidelines for the transport and welfare of sheep:

- Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines – Land Transport of Livestock (Click [here](#) to view)
- Is the animal fit to load Guide? MLA (Click [here](#) to view) or watch this [clip](#).
- Welfare scoring nutritionally deprived beef cattle, dairy cattle and their crosses, sheep and horses. (Click [here](#) to view)
- Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines for Sheep. (Click [here](#) to view)

State and Territory-specific legislation: Each state and territory has their own legislation governing animal welfare within its jurisdiction. The legislation in each state and territory is given below:

State/Territory	Animal Welfare Act	Animal Welfare Regulation	Department to Contact and Livestock Website
ACT	Animal Welfare Act 1992	Animal Welfare Regulation 2001	Transport Canberra and City Services
NSW	Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1979	Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Regulation 2012	Department of Primary Industries
NT	Animal Protection Act 2018	Animal Protection Regulations 2022	Department of Agriculture and Fisheries
QLD	Animal Care and Protection Act 2001	Animal Care and Protection Regulation 2012	Department of Agriculture and Fisheries
SA	Animal Welfare Act 1985	Animal Welfare Regulations 2012	Department of Environment and Water
TAS	Animal Welfare Act 1993	Animal Welfare (General) Regulations 2013	Department of Natural Resources & Environment Tasmania (NRE Tas)
VIC	Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986	Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Regulations 2019	Agriculture Victoria
WA	Animal Welfare Act 2002	Animal Welfare (General) Regulations 2003	Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development

Table 1. State and Territory Legislation, StockLive

EID Requirements for Sheep

Electronic Identification (EID) is becoming mandatory for sheep and goats across Australia. Implementing EID in sheep in Australia is aimed at improving traceability and biosecurity. There are different roll out strategies and dates across states and territories, these are outlined below:

State/ Territory	New born lambs or kids BORN AFTER 1 January 2025	New born lambs or kids BORN BEFORE 1 January 2025	Abattoirs	Saleyards	Property to Property + Online Platforms within 2 days
ACT	1 January 2025	1 January 2025	NA	NA	1 January 2025
NSW	1 January 2025	1 January 2027	30 June 2024	1 January 2025	1 January 2025
NT	1 January 2025	1 January 2025	1 January 2025	1 January 2025	1 January 2025
QLD	1 January 2025	1 January 2027	1 January 2025	1 January 2025	1 January 2025
SA	1 January 2025	1 January 2027	1 January 2025	1 July 2025	1 January 2025
TAS	1 January 2025	1 January 2025	1 January 2025	1 January 2025	1 January 2025
VIC	1 January 2017	1 January 2022	31 December 2017	31 March 2018	31 March 2018
WA	1 January 2025	1 July 2026	1 July 2025	1 July 2025	1 July 2026

Table 2. EID Requirements, StockLive

Useful EID Resources:

State/Territory	Department to Contact and Livestock Website
National	Sheep & Goat Traceability Task Force
ACT	Environment ACT
NSW	NSW DPI
NT	NT Government
QLD	QLD Government
SA	PIRSA
TAS	NRE Tasmania
VIC	AgVic
WA	Agriculture WA

Table 3. Useful EID Resources, StockLive

Chain of Responsibility

The transport of livestock involves multiple parties, each of whom has a defined responsibility in ensuring the welfare of the animals. Assessors must understand who has responsibility at different stages of the management and care of the animals prior to sale, and then ultimately after they reach their new destination.

Consignor: Responsible for assembling, preparing, and assessing livestock as fit for transport. This includes providing adequate feed and water, ensuring appropriate holding periods before loading, and making the final assessment of fitness for the journey.

Transporter: Responsible for the safe and humane transport of livestock, including proper loading, ensuring adequate space and ventilation, conducting regular inspections, providing rest periods (spelling), and overseeing the safe unloading of animals.

Receiver: Responsible for ensuring that sheep are properly handled upon arrival, including immediate care and attention to any issues arising from the transport.

Further resources and information:

[Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines](#)

[Glovebox Guide](#) – Biosecurity emergency animal diseases and preparing livestock for transport

[NSW DPI Livestock Welfare](#)

[Saleyards Australia Chain of Responsibility](#)

[NHVR Chain of Responsibility](#)

Livestock Description

Production Systems

Term	Definition
Wool Production System	A farming system primarily focused on breeding or managing sheep that have high quality wool, typically a Merino breed.
Meat Sheep – Prime Lamb Production System	A farming system primarily focused on producing fast growing lambs for meat, typically using crossbreeding with maternal and terminal sheep breeds.
Dual Purpose Production System	A farming system that has a focus on both wool and meat, incorporating high quality wool and efficient lamb growth and reproduction performance.
Composite Production System	A farming system that has a similar focus to a Prime Lamb Production System, however also focuses on self replacing maternal attributes.

Sex Definitions

Term	Definition
Mixed	A combination of male and female ovine
Ewe	A female ovine
Wether	A male ovine that has been castrated
Ram	A male ovine that is entire (has not been castrated)
Dam	Female parent of a lamb or potential lamb
Sire	Male parent of a lamb or potential lamb

Categories

Term	Definition
Scanned in Lamb (SIL)	Ewe has been diagnosed pregnant via ultrasound; may be single or multiple pregnancy
Young Lamb	Young female or castrated male ovine that has zero (0) permanent incisor teeth and no eruption of permanent upper molar teeth. Generally unshorn and normally up to 5 months of age.
Lamb	Male and female ovine with no secondary sexual characteristics. Generally weaned, shorn with no permanent incisor teeth in wear. Normally older than 5 months and under 12 months.
Hogget	Female or castrated male sheep with no secondary sexual characteristics that have one (1) but no more than two (2) permanent incisor teeth in wear.
Ram Lamb	Uncastrated male lamb or entire male lamb.
Station Mated Ewe	Ewe that has been mated to rams on the vendor's property; however, pregnancy scanning has not been carried out to determine pregnancy status (pregnant, not pregnant, or SIL)
Ewe and lamb	Ewes with lamb(s) that have not been weaned at the time of sale
Crossbred	Sheep that are the result of breeding two or more different breeds. This term is commonly used to describe all non-Merino breeds and their crosses.
First Cross	A crossbred sheep that is produced by mating a Merino ewe with a Border Leicester ram.

Breed Descriptors & Definition of Ownership/Traceability

Term	Definition
Vendor Bred	Vendor has owned the sheep since birth. Can have moved between different properties and PICs under the control of the vendor (ownership or agistment)
Lifetime Traceable	The animals' movements between properties/ land holdings is traceable since birth
Purchased	The sheep have been purchased from another producer, property, or PIC. Purchase timeframes on the NVD are grouped as follows: Less than 2 months; 2–6 month; 6–12 months; more than 12 months. If livestock were purchased at different times, the most recent purchase timeframe should be used.
Breed Description	Breed description is provided to describe animals with genetic characteristics or traits representative of a certain breed.
Bloodline	Bloodline refers to a lineage or family line within a breed that often shares further common genetic traits, such as wool quality, fertility, growth rates or disease resistance. A bloodline will generally be the seed stock breeders' stud name.

The following table is a list of breeds that StockLive has included for assessors. If the breed or the cross is not in the available table, then it can be described in 'Other'.

StockLive Breed List – Sheep			
Australian White	Dohne Merino	Perendale	White Dorper
Bond	Dorper	Poll Dorset	White Suffolk
Border Leicester	Dorset Horn	Poll Merino	Wiltipoll
Cheviot	Finn Sheep	Polwarth	Wiltshire Horn
Coolalee	Gromark	SAMM (South African Meat Merino)	Other
Coopworth	Hampshire Down	Southdown	
Cormo	Meatmaster	Suffolk	
Corriedale	Merino	Texel	

Table 4. SL Sheep Breeds, Sheep Genetics Australia

Flock Registered with Breed Society – In Australia, a flock registered with a breed society indicates that the sheep in that flock have been officially recorded or registered with the breed organisation (breed society). A breed society is designed to maintain breed standards.

Flock Code – A flock code is a 4-digit unique identifier that has been allocated to that flock by the breed society. The flock code is used in conjunction with a breed code. Some flocks may not be registered with a specific breed society, these flocks will have been allocated a flock code by Sheep Genetics specifically for the purpose of submitting data to the Australian Genetic Evaluation (LAMBPLAN or MERINOSELECT), their flock code will be 4 digits and start with a “9”.

Age & Weaning

Date of Birth

Age can be described using one of the following formats:

Terminology	Description	Example/Notes
Known date of birth	DD/MM/YYYY	This is intended for stud sheep only
Known months or year of age	XX months of age or XX years of age OR XX-XX months of age or XX-XX years of age	10 months of age or 4 years of age OR 8 – 10 months of age or 4 – 5 years of age
Lambing period	MMM/YY to MMM/YY	JUL-25 to SEP-25

Age Stages can also be used to describe an animal:

Age Name	Abbreviations	Average Age of Management Group	Age Range
Birth	B	0	0
Weaning	W	100	40-149 days
Post weaning	P	225	150-299 days
Yearling	Y	365	300-449 days
Hogget	H	540	450-659 days
Adult	A	700	660 days or older

Table 5. Ages, Sally Martin, SheepMetriX

Weaning

Weaning is the separation of the lamb from its mother (ewe) and means it is no longer suckling. The age of lambs at weaning may vary slightly according to production system environment.

Production System	Weaning Age
Wool Production	10-14 weeks (70-100 days)
Prime Lamb Production/Dual Purpose	8-12 weeks (56-84 days)
Drought conditions	As early as 8 weeks

Table 6. Weaning, Sally Martin, SheepMetriX

Joining

Terminology	Description
Natural Joining	Ram mates with a ewe in the paddock or yards.
Artificial Insemination (AI)	Semen from a ram is collected and inserted into a ewe's reproductive tract by a veterinarian or trained technician.
Embryo Transfer (ET)	An advanced breeding technique where embryos are collected from a ewe (donor) and fertilised by semen collected from a ram and then implanted into a recipient (surrogate) ewe.
Date Sires Ram(s) In	The date the ram(s) were put in with the ewes for mating.
Date Sires Ram(s) Out	The date the ram(s) were taken out of the ewes.
Pregnancy Test Method	Ultrasound testing returns a scanning status of: in lamb (pregnant); multiple (pregnant with multiple foetuses); single (pregnant with a single foetus); dry (not pregnant).
Pregnancy Personnel	Veterinarian; Independent Scanner.



Figure 1, Sheep Artificial Insemination, NZ Herald 2018

Shearing

Last Crutching Date - the date the sheep were last crutched (DD/MM/YYYY)

Crutch Type

Crutch Type	Description
Breech crutch	Removal of wool around the tail, anus and vulva
Belly crutch	Removal of wool from the belly area
Full crutch	Removal of wool from the breech, belly and between the back legs
Ring or Wig Crutch	Removal of wool around the eyes and face
Pizzle Crutch	Removal of wool around the pizzle of wether or ram

Last Shearing Date - the date the sheep were last shorn (DD/MM/YYYY)

Flock Wool Length - an estimate of wool length in millimeters

<60mm	60mm	70mm	80mm	90mm	100mm	110mm	>110mm
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Flock Average (Fibre Diameter) - the average fibre diameter (measured in microns) can be derived from individual fibre diameter test results or recent wool sale advice reports.

Flock Grade

Fibre Diameter (Micron)	Micron Category	Descriptor
15.5 um and finer	Ultrafine	Premium Merino wool, luxury wear, baby wear, high fashion
15.6 to 18.5 um	Superfine	Fine Merino, next to skin clothing, high end garments
18.6 to 20.5 um	Fine	Light knitwear, activewear
20.6 to 22.5 um	Medium	Knitwear, base layer, some suiting fabrics
22.6 to 24.5 um	Strong	Outerwear, socks, and some upholstery fabrics
> 24.5 um	Broad/Very Strong	Carpet wool, insulation, blankets, industrial uses
	Crossbred	Carpet wool, insulation, blankets, industrial uses

Table 8. Flock Grade, Sally Martin, SheepMetriX

Animal Health

Animal Health Treatments

Always follow the safety and use directions on the product label. Rules around the use of some chemicals can differ from state to state, for more information go to <https://www.apvma.gov.au/about/use-agvet-chemicals-australia>

Parasites

Internal parasites are organisms living inside the animal's body, typically in the gastrointestinal tract, lungs, or liver, and cause damage by feeding on blood, tissues, or nutrients. External parasites live on the outside of the animal's body, causing skin irritation, fleece damage and blood loss. Common symptoms of excessive parasite burdens include general ill-thrift, loss of appetite and body condition and scouring. For further information, visit <https://wormboss.com.au>.

Treatment Types	Description
Oral Drench (Anthelmintics)	Given orally to treat or protect sheep from parasites
Capsules	Slow-release oral treatment used to deliver nutrients, vitamins/minerals or parasiticides over an extended period
Injections	Vaccinations prevent diseases including clostridials, cheesy gland, scabby mouth, and campylobacter, and supplements manage nutritional deficiencies such as B12 and selenium
Pour On	Typically applied in a liquid formulation along the backline for the control of external parasites (with limited efficacy against internal parasites)
Implants	Limited in sheep to hormonal implants enhancing reproduction, e.g. Regulin (slow-release melatonin implant)

Export Slaughter Interval & Withholding Periods

Export Slaughter Interval (ESI) - the minimum time that must elapse between the last administration of a veterinary chemical (eg: drench, vaccine, antibiotic) to animals and their slaughter for export. ESIs manage differences between Maximum Residue Limits (MRLs) allowed for chemicals in Australia and the MRLs of its trading partners. ESI advice is particularly important for quality assurance schemes, and especially for producers filling out the National Vendor Declaration (NVD) forms as part of the whole-of-chain management of exported products. ESIs have been set by the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) <https://www.apvma.gov.au/>.

Withholding Period (WHP) - the minimum amount of time which must elapse between last administration or application of a veterinary chemical product, including treated feed, and the slaughter, collection, harvesting or use of the animal commodity for human consumption. WHPs are mandatory for domestic slaughter and are included on the label of every registered product.

Mulesing & Docking

Mulesing – a surgical procedure to remove wool bearing skin folds from around the breech as a preventative measure for breech flystrike

Tail Docking – the removal of part of the sheep's tail to reduce the risk of breech flystrike. The tail should be left long enough to cover the vulva in females, and a similar length for males.

Pain Relief – there are currently four products available for use in sheep to alleviate pain from mulesing, tail docking and castration, which can be used standalone or in combination:

- **Short Acting** – fast acting but short-lasting. Local anaesthetics block pain so sensory function of the area is lost. These are commercially available in Australia for use in sheep as Tri-Solfen® and NumOcaine®, both containing the primary active Lignocaine.
- **Long Acting** – slow acting but longer lasting. The analgesic products registered for use in sheep in Australia are Buccalgesic® and Metacam20®, based on the common active ingredient meloxicam which is a non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug (NSAID).

Resource for more information – [Wool | Analgesia & Anaesthesia](#)

Recording Mulesing Status

Mulesing status is an important animal welfare and market-access attribute that must be recorded accurately for all sheep assessments. The terminology below aligns with the AWEX National Wool Declaration (NWD) and is recognised nationally by processors, exporters, and animal welfare assurance programs.

Assessors must confirm mulesing status with the vendor and by visual assessment and select the correct category from the options below:

Category	Definition/Description	Assessor Guidance
Non-Mulesed (NM)	Sheep in this lot have never been mulesed.	Confirm with the vendor that no sheep in the lot have ever been mulesed. Select only if all animals are NM.
Mulesed with Pain Relief (PR)	All sheep in this lot were mulesed using a registered analgesic and/or anaesthetic short- or long-acting product (e.g. Tri-Solfen, NumOcaine, Buccalgesic).	Confirm product used and age or timing of treatment if known. Select PR only if all mulesed animals received pain relief at the time of mulesing.
Mulesed (No Pain Relief) (M)	Sheep in this lot were mulesed without the use of pain relief.	Select only if no analgesic or anaesthetic was applied. This category may limit market access.
Analgesic/ Anaesthetic Only (AA)	Sheep were not mulesed, but received pain relief for another husbandry procedure (e.g. tail docking, castration).	Use only when pain relief has been administered for other procedures but mulesing has not been performed.
Not Declared (ND)	Mulesing status has not been confirmed or vendor has not provided this information.	Select only as a last resort if status cannot be verified. Add a note explaining why declaration could not be confirmed.

Movement Control & Grazing

Grazing Conditions

Term	Definition
Improved Pasture	A pasture that has been developed by sowing a mixture of introduced grasses and legumes. It can also include native and naturalized pastures that have been fertilised and had legumes introduced.
Native Pasture	Grasses that occurred in Australia before European settlement and have limited legume content or fertiliser history.
Rangelands	Arid, semi-arid and tropical savanna regions dominated by native vegetation used primarily for extensive livestock grazing, unsuitable for cropping.
Grazing Crop	Forage crop sown specifically to be grazed by livestock, used to fill the feed gap during autumn and winter months. Can be locked up and harvested for grain.
Supplementary	The practice of providing additional fodder (grain, pellet or hay) to sheep to complement the pasture or forage when insufficient quality and quantity is present in the paddock. It can be fed in self feeders or trail fed.
Confinement Feedlot	A confined area or yard where sheep are kept and fed a maintenance ration (grain, pellet, hay) for a period of time when pasture is limited or during drought.
Production Feedlot	A confined area or yard where sheep are fed a production ration (high energy and protein) to enhance or maximise weight gain and condition prior to processing or sale.

Movement Restrictions

Movement control regulations prevent the spread of infectious livestock diseases between properties, regions, and states. When sheep are sold, transported, or agisted, vendors and buyers must provide accountability and traceability through the completion of a [National Vendor Declaration](#) (NVD), and comply with national and state-level biosecurity requirements including the accurate completion of the [National Sheep Health Declaration](#) (NSHD).

Assessors play a key role in verifying the status of consignments prior to listing for sale. This includes identifying any restricted diseases—such as Ovine Johne’s Disease (OJD), Ovine Brucellosis, Footrot, and Scabby Mouth—and recording available documentation and declarations.

Understanding disease-specific movement restrictions helps maintain animal welfare, safeguard market access, and protect the reputation of Australia’s sheep industry. Please refer to the industry links in each section below to ensure you understand the regulatory requirements of the states and territories you operate in.

Movement Control & Grazing

Ovine Brucellosis

Ovine Brucellosis (OB) is a reproductive disease caused by *Brucella ovis*, primarily affecting rams. It reduces fertility through testicular infection and inflammation of reproductive tissues. Rams showing signs of swelling, asymmetry, or scrotal lesions should be flagged and excluded pending veterinary assessment.

Most states operate accreditation schemes allowing owners to test and certify flocks as free from OB. Sheep from accredited flocks are more marketable and may be required for entry into some states or stud sales.

Assessors should confirm the OB accreditation status of the flock and also note certification expiry date.

OB is notifiable in some states and subject to interstate movement controls.

Scabby Mouth

Scabby Mouth (Orf) is a contagious viral disease caused by a parapoxvirus that affects the lips, nose, and occasionally the udder or feet of sheep and goats. It presents as scabs or pustules around the mouth and muzzle and is transmitted through direct contact or contaminated environments. While Scabby Mouth usually resolves without treatment, infected sheep are unsightly and can raise welfare concerns. The virus is zoonotic — assessors and handlers should wear gloves and practice hygiene to prevent infection.

Vaccination is available and commonly used in flocks where the disease is endemic. Sheep showing active lesions should not be offered for public sale, and vendors should disclose any recent outbreaks.

Assessors should record vaccination information where available and recommend deferral of sale until visible scabs have healed.

Footrot

Footrot is a contagious bacterial infection of the hoof caused by *Dichelobacter nodosus*, resulting in lameness, tissue separation, and reduced productivity. Two main forms occur in Australia:

- **Benign footrot**, which causes mild inflammation and generally resolves in dry conditions.
- **Virulent footrot**, a severe, highly contagious form that spreads rapidly in warm, moist environments and can cause significant welfare and economic loss.

The disease spreads via infected feet, contaminated ground, or handling facilities. Early signs include lameness, moist or inflamed interdigital skin, and separation of the hoof horn.

Where infection is suspected, the consignment should not proceed without veterinary confirmation of status.

Virulent footrot is a notifiable disease in most states, with movement and sale restrictions applying until infection is eradicated. Vendors are responsible for declaring disease status on the National Sheep Health Declaration (NSHD).

Movement Control & Grazing

Ovine Johnes Disease

Ovine Johnes Disease (OJD) is a chronic wasting disease caused by *Mycobacterium avium* subspecies paratuberculosis (MAP). It leads to progressive weight loss, scouring, and eventual death, with significant production and reputational impacts. The disease spreads through ingestion of contaminated pasture, water, or milk from infected animals.

Australian producers are encouraged to regulate control and management measures through participation in flock health assurance and the Sheep Market Assurance Program (SheepMAP).

SheepMAP Status Levels

SheepMAP is a voluntary program that provides a framework for producers to demonstrate low risk of OJD infection through regular testing and biosecurity controls. Accredited flocks are assigned a status level — from MN1 (entry level) to MN3 (highest assurance) — based on the number of consecutive negative whole-flock tests:

- **MN1:** One negative test (minimum 2 years apart from baseline).
- **MN2:** Two consecutive negative tests.
- **MN3:** Three or more consecutive negative tests.

A higher MN status indicates a greater assurance that the flock is free from OJD. This information must be recorded in the National Sheep Health Declaration (NSHD) when sheep are sold or moved, as it is a key indicator of disease risk to prospective buyers.

State/ Territory	Ovine Brucellosis Resources	Scabby Mouth Resources	Footrot Resources	Ovine Johnes Disease Resources
QLD	QLD Ovine Brucellosis Accreditation Scheme	-	Reportable Diseases in Qld	Johnes Disease in Qld
NSW	NSW Ovine Brucellosis Accreditation Scheme	-	Virulent Footrot Biosecurity	Ovine Johnes Disease
ACT	-	-	-	-
VIC	Moving Sheep into Victoria	Scabby Mouth	Moving Sheep into Victoria	Moving Sheep into Victoria
TAS	TAS Ovine Brucellosis Accreditation Scheme	-	Footrot- ID and Control in the Field- TAS	Ovine Johnes Disease
NT	-	-	-	-
SA	SA Ovine Brucellosis Accreditation Scheme	-	SA Footrot Management Program	Ovine Johnes Disease Management in SA
WA	-	WA Scabby Mouth Transport and Sale	Footrot	-
National	-	-	-	Australian Johnes Disease MAP for Sheep

Certifications

Livestock Production Assurance (LPA) – The on-farm assurance program that underpins market access for Australian red meat. LPA National Vendor Declarations (NVDs) provide evidence of livestock history and on-farm practices when transferring livestock through the value chain. [Livestock Production Assurance \(LPA\)](#) | [Integrity Systems](#)

Meat Standards Australia (MSA) – Eating Quality carcass grading used within the Australian red meat industry. Managed by Meat & Livestock Australia. [Meat Standards Australia](#) | [Meat & Livestock Australia](#)

Responsible Wool Standards (RWS) – [RWS Textile Exchange](#)

Authentico – [Authentico](#)

ZQ – [Discover ZQ](#)

Australian Wool Sustainability Scheme (AWSS) – [Australian Wool Sustainability Scheme](#)

- SustainaWOOL
- ResponsiWOOL

Johnes Disease Market Assurance Program (MAP) – [Johnes Disease Market Assurance Program](#)

- Sheep (Assurance Levels) – SheepMAP Program
 - MN1
 - MN2
 - MN3

Ovine Brucellosis Accreditation (NSW) – [OB Accreditation Scheme Guidelines](#)

Organic Certified – Certified organic means a product has been independently audited by an approved certifying body to the National Standard for Organic and Bio-Dynamic Produce (and aligned private standards). This covers how food is grown, handled, and processed – without synthetic chemicals or GMOs, with strong requirements for animal welfare, soil health, biodiversity, and full traceability. [Organic Certified](#) | [Aust Organic](#)

USDA Organic Certified – In the United States, “USDA Organic” means a product has been independently inspected and certified under the USDA National Organic Program (NOP) standards. This covers how food is grown, handled, and processed – without synthetic pesticides, fertilizers, or GMOs, with strong requirements for soil and water quality, animal welfare, biodiversity, and full traceability. For Australian producers, USDA Organic certification is often pursued when exporting to, or selling into, the U.S. market, as it provides direct access and consumer recognition under the U.S. system. [USDA Organic Certified](#) | [ACO](#)

JBS Farm Assurance – [JBS Farm Assurance](#)

Other accreditations – These may include sustainability, carbon farming claims, bio-dynamic and the like.

Assessments

Weights

Term	Definition
Time Off Feed	The length of time in hours that the sheep last had access to a food source (pasture, grain, hay, pellets).
Time Off Water	The length of time in hours the sheep last had access to water.
Average Live Weight	The average (mean) live body weight of the consigned animals.
Lightest Live Weight	The body weight of the lightest animal in the consignment.
Heaviest Live Weight	The body weight of the heaviest animal in the consignment.
Total Live Weight	The total (sum) of all the body weights in the consignment.
Weight Ranges	The classification or grouping of animals based on their live weights within specified intervals (as shown in the table below).

Live Weight Ranges

<20kg	21 – 25kg	26 – 30kg	31 – 35kg	36 – 40kg	41 – 45kg	46 – 50kg	51 – 55kg	56 – 60kg	61+kg
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Table 7. Live Weight Ranges, Sally Martin, Sheep MetriX



Figure 3, Merinos, Canva 2025

Assessments

Scores

Fat Score - is a standardised numerical system to assess the amount of subcutaneous fat over the long ribs, 10-11 cm from the midline on the second last long rib (just before the short rib or loin area) (see figure 5 below).

Note: Use Fat Score if you have captured a Condition Score.

The scores 1 to 5 are described below:

Score	GR Tissue Depth	Assessment Over the Long Ribs
1	Up to 5mm	individual ribs are easily felt and no tissue can be felt over the ribs. Depressions are quite obvious between the ribs.
2	Over 5mm up to 10mm	Individual ribs are felt with some tissue able to be felt over the ribs. Depressions between the ribs are obvious.
3	Over 10mm up to 15mm	Individual ribs can still be felt but they are more rounded, with tissue movement being felt over the ribs. The depression between ribs is less obvious.
4	Over 15mm up to 20mm	The ribs can just be felt, with no depression between the ribs. Tissue movement over the ribs is apparent.
5	Over 20mm+	Ribs cannot be felt.

Fat Score Diagram

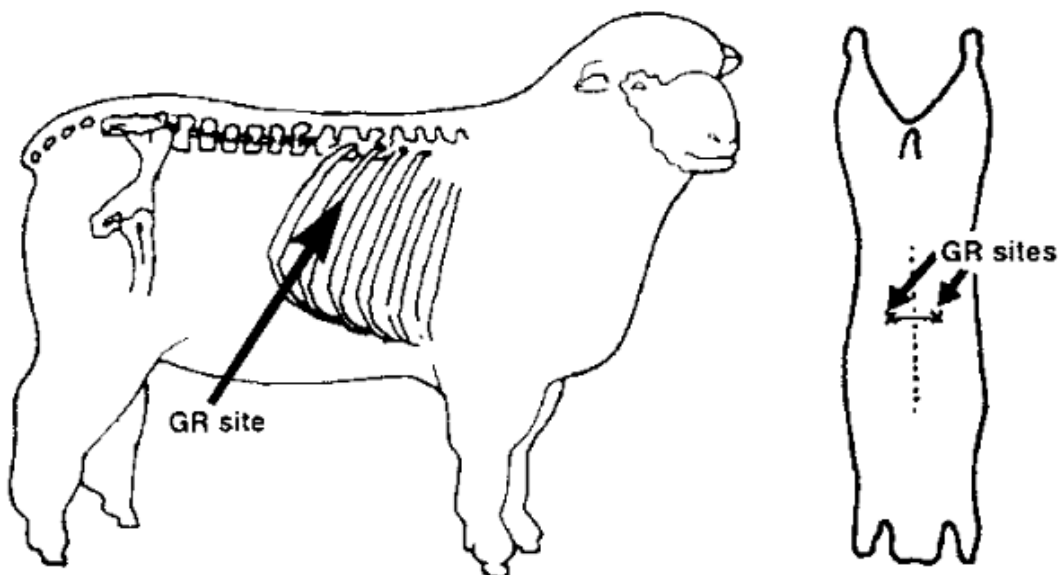


Figure 5, Fat Score Diagram, NSW DPI Prograze Manual

Frame Score - is used to assess store stock and is a measure of height from the ground to the highest point of the shoulder (withers) in centimeters less wool length. Refer to the diagram below.

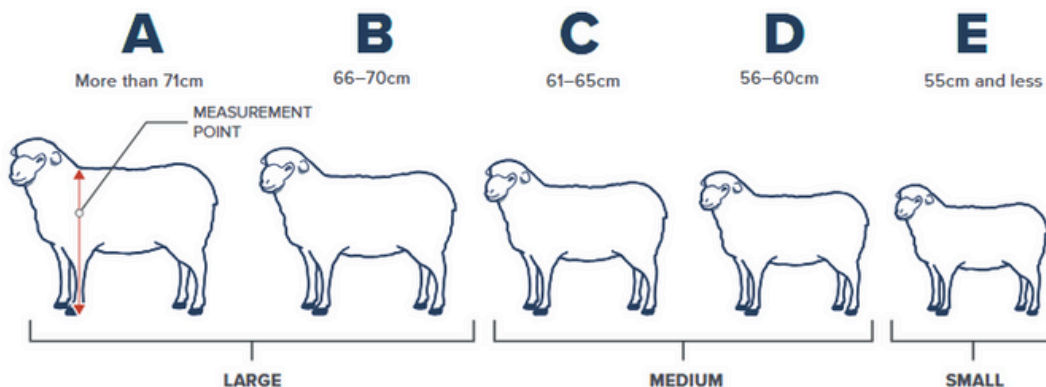


Figure 8. Frame Size, MLA Sheep Assessment Manual

Wrinkle Scores - Wrinkle can be scored on the breech, body or neck and is the amount of skin wrinkle in these areas and are scored from 1 (no wrinkle) to 5 (very heavy wrinkle or skin). All wrinkle locations are correlated and provide a risk factor for breech flystrike, with the more wrinkle the higher the risk.

Body Wrinkle

Score	Description
1	Plain bodied sheep with no body wrinkle
2	Plain bodied sheep with a few small wrinkles over the body
3	Slight wrinkling over the body
4	Heavy wrinkling over the body
5	Very heavy wrinkling and heavy folds of skin over the body

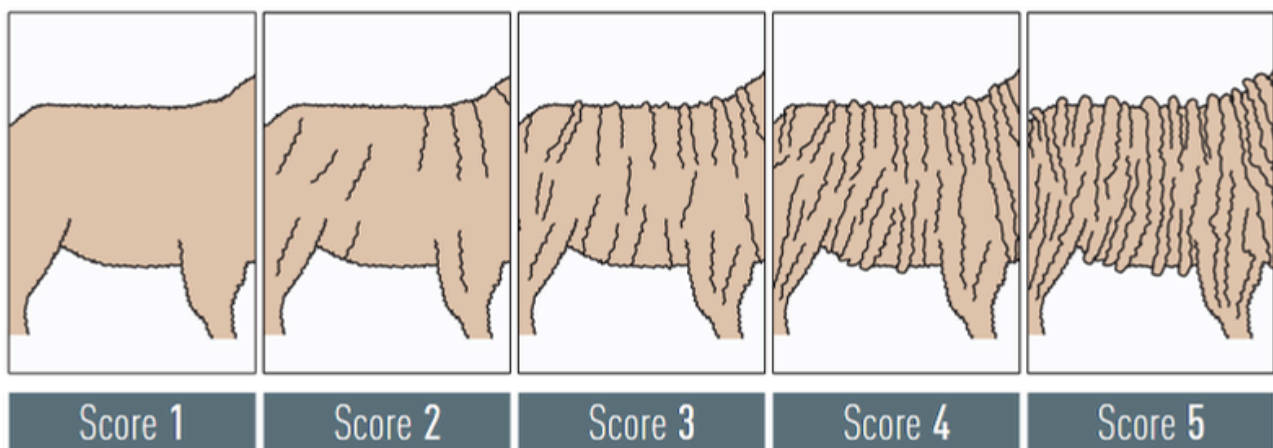


Figure 6, Body Wrinkle, Sally Martin, SheepMetriX

Breech Wrinkle

Score	Description
1	No wrinkle
2	A few small wrinkles over the tail set
3	Slight wrinkling over the the tail set and sides of the tail
4	Heavy wrinkling over the tail set and sides of the tail
5	Extensive wrinkle at the tail set, sides of the tail, adjacent to the anus/vulva and down the legs

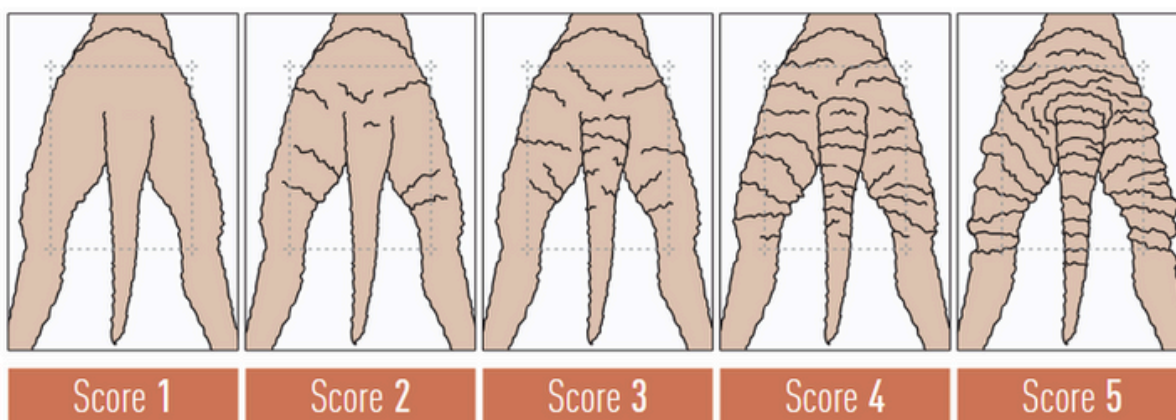


Figure 7, Breech Wrinkle, Sally Martin, SheepMetriX

Dentition

Dentition estimates the age and physiological development of sheep. The exact age the next pair of teeth erupts varies between animals and is influenced by genetics, nutrition and environment.

Dentition scores are:

Dentition Scores	Description	Associated Age
Milk	All 8 incisors are small, white and temporary (lambs teeth)	Birth to 12 months
2 tooth	2 permanent central incisors (middle pair) have erupted	12 to 18 months
4 tooth	4 permanent incisors (2 central; 2 middle; 4 milk teeth)	18 to 24 months
6 tooth	6 permanent incisors (2 central; 2 middle; 2 lateral; 2 milk)	24 to 36 months
8 tooth	(Full mouth) All 8 permanent incisors	28 to 48 months
Broken Mouth	one or more incisors are missing, loose or excessively worn	Typically 6 years and older

Guide to estimating sheep age by their teeth



Birth to 12 months
Lamb's teeth



12-19 months
Two-tooth 2 central incisors
 6 milk teeth



18-24 months
Four-tooth 2 central incisors
 2 middle incisors
 4 milk teeth



23-36 months
Six-tooth 2 central incisors
 2 middle incisors
 2 milk teeth



28-48 months
Eight-tooth 2 central incisors
 2 middle incisors
 2 corner incisors

Figure 9. Dentition Guide, NSW DPI

Shedding Sheep

Shedding sheep, also known as hair sheep or self-shedding breeds, naturally lose their wool annually without shearing. Common breeds include Australian White, Dorper, White Dorper and Wiltipoll. Accurate assessment of shedding characteristics helps buyers understand genetic consistency, management requirements, coat type uniformity and suitability for grazing systems.

Shedding Type

This captures breed type and consignment composition- whether the sheep are shedding breeds or wool types.

Shedding Type	Description
Fully shedding breed	All animals are self-shedding
Partially shedding breed or cross	Majority are self-shedding
Non-shedding breed	Traditional wool type
Mixed breed mob	Includes both shedding and wool breeds (specify proportions in comments)

Shedding Stage

Assess both the current stage of shedding and visual coat condition. Shedding timing varies with breed, age, and environment. If the shedding stage is mixed, note the proportions of each stage in the comments section as shedding uniformity is indicative of genetic reliability and consistency in management outcomes, which is useful for buyers assessing future performance.

Shedding Stage	Description
Fully shed	Hair coat only visible
Partially shed	Patchy or transitional coat
Not yet shed	Wool coat remains
Mixed mob	Specify proportions in comments

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