



Sheep CRC Practical Wisdom Notes

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LICEBOSS: AUSTRALIA'S SHEEP LICE CONTROL RESOURCE

Key points

- Lice are a concern for all sheep producers.
- Lice can be eradicated.

Introduction

Lice remain one of the top health issues for sheep producers, despite treatments having been available for many years that can successfully eradicate lice.

Even after lice have gone from a property there is the ever-present threat of a new incursion. As such, effective lice control consists of three elements:

- preventing new infestations
- structured monitoring of sheep for lice
- strategic use of chemicals to treat infestations

LiceBoss is an information source able to provide sheep producers with information and tools that will assist them to implement each of the three control elements as required.

Can lice be eradicated?

While lice have developed resistance to some treatment products, sheep producers are fortunate to have a number of chemical groups that can completely remove a lice infestation. The most important part of treatment is that it be applied correctly to all affected sheep.

Once there are no lice on a property, the job has not finished. Producers should have a plan to keep lice out. This not only involves preventing lousy sheep from entering the property on strays or brought in sheep, but also stopping your own sheep from straying off the property and returning with lice from elsewhere.

Finally, early detection of lice is paramount to making the best decisions about treating an existing or new lice infestation. Knowing how to effectively monitor for lice is critical to early detection.

While lice can be eradicated relatively easily from individual properties, history has shown that they are unlikely to ever be eradicated across the country, so there will always be a reservoir of lice ready to infest clean sheep.

What technical information is provided for controlling lice?

Introductory information is provided for five topics. These are 'About lice'; 'Preventing lice'; 'Monitoring for lice'; 'Treating lice' and 'Resistance, residues and safety'.

On each page you will find links to detailed LiceBoss Notes (provided as pdf files) about topics related to the section. All notes are listed in the table below.

Biology of sheep lice (<i>Bovicola ovis</i>)	Causes of rubbing in sheep
Why control sheep lice? Economic effects of lice on production	Avoiding 'dermo' at dipping
Sheep lice - biosecurity can prevent introduction	Sheep lice treatments - chemical group characteristics
Monitoring sheep for lice	Off-shears backline treatments

Shower dipping	Plunge and cage dipping
Sheep lice control for ewes and lambs	Preventing resistance in sheep lice
Hand-jetting sheep for lice control	Wool and meat residues
Control of body lice (<i>Bovicola ovis</i>) on shedding and hair breeds of sheep	Use of pesticides for controlling lice - occupational health and safety
Itch mite in sheep	

What are the LiceBoss Tools?

The LiceBoss tools are interactive and simple to use, allowing you to input your own information and select options relevant to your situation. The inputs are straightforward, such as selecting your preferred month for shearing, the number of sheep in a mob, whether you have observed lice or signs of lice, whether there are lambs present, and when you might next be able to treat the sheep, however, inputs vary for the particular tool you are using.

The **Products Tool** displays a list of registered products available for lice and flystrike control. Use the Ewe-lamb Treatments Tool when choosing a treatment strategy when lice are found in pregnant ewes or ewes that have lambs at foot.

The **Long Wool Tool** helps to determine the best course of action when lice are found more than 6 weeks after shearing.

The **Treatment Tool** assesses dipping, showering and backline application methods and helps to identify faults in technique and possible causes of a treatment failure.

When sheep are rubbing, use the **Rubbing Tool** to determine whether rubbing is likely to be due to lice or some other cause.

Use the **Short Wool Tool** to assist in deciding whether or not to treat for lice at, or soon after, shearing. It can also help identify potential sources of infestation and assist the design of a lice biosecurity plan.

The **Wool Residue Tool** estimates the pesticide residue concentration likely in the wool at the next shearing after application of chemicals for lice or flystrike control.

Take-home messages

- Whether your sheep have lice or not, LiceBoss provides information and tools for all sheep managers.
- Use the Liceboss website www.liceboss.com.au as your reference for all lice control information, including treatments, management and monitoring.

Further information:

www.liceboss.com.au
www.paraboss.com.au

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