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Other Ruminant Market Development Program

Jennifer Fleming, Executive Director

In November 2004 the CSF submitted their National Border Closure Recovery Strategy to Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada. Since then we have dedicated a large portion of our resources towards lobbying for funding for the four pillars of the strategy; Investment in the National Sheep Flock; the National Scrapie Strategy; Federally Inspected Abattoir and Processing Capacity and; Industry Development and Adjustment. Our lobbying efforts have been met with considerable success.

Minister Mitchell has announced investment into the national sheep flock in the form of the TISP payment (Transitional Industry Support Payments). The inventory date, however, was December 23 and the money was for market lambs on farm. As a result many sheep producers did not benefit despite our efforts to have the program money distributed more equitably. The federal government has also provided funding for our National Genotyping Program and the Voluntary Scrapie Flock Certification Pilot Program, however a comprehensive surveillance program has yet to be announced.

In August the CSF was informed that the Federal Government had allocated \$2 million for the *Other Ruminant Market Development Program*, for which the CSF was *notionally* allocated \$850,000. This means that in order to receive the money, we had to write a strategy and business plan outlining how the CSF would use the money to propel the industry forward. The condition was that the money *could not* be spent on genetics and/or breeding.

After consultation with the provincial associations and provincial government personnel, the strategy was submitted on September 30th. We are hoping to hear back from the government within the next four weeks. It is our hope that they will approve us for the full amount requested \$921,734.00. Yes, that is more than the \$850,000 that was nominally allocated. However, there is the possibility that the government will only approve certain aspects of the strategy for funding, or that they might not approve the other commodity groups (cervids, bison, goat and veal) proposals entirely, this opens the possibility of more money being allocated to the CSF Strategy.

Those who worked on the strategy strove to ensure that it encompassed the needs of all Canadian sheep producers and industry partners. Some of the key elements of the strategy include market opportunity analysis, assessments of processing capacities, producer education, nutritional analysis and merchandising communication material. Copies of the strategy can be obtained through your provincial sheep association or on the CSF website (www.cansheep.ca).

The entire document was built around the idea that we would like to increase consumption of Canadian lamb by 0.25 kg/person by 2010. In order to accomplish this goal, production must be expanded by 9% per year. This means that Canadian sheep producers must produce and additional 60,000 per year for the next five years. So, by 2010, an additional 300,000 lambs per year will need to be processed. This might seem like an ambitious undertaking however all market indications suggest that this consumption increase is realistic. With this in mind and the current market prices, there are clearly great opportunities in the coming years for our industry.

Scrapie Project Announcement

Please announce to your members and ask them to spread the news:

The number of samples received to date for the National Genotyping Project has been much lower than anticipated. A large portion of the funding allocated for the summer and fall has not been used. There is the risk of losing some of the government funding for this year if sample submission is not increased.

If you are planning on genotype testing for scrapie resistance **take advantage of the funding while it lasts.**

Benefits of sampling through the project:

- Knowledge of scrapie resistance of individual animals. Information may be used to selectively breed to increase the overall resistance of your flock and is a selling feature for breeding stock.
- Discounted rate for genotype results for 3 codons (\$10/sample versus \$35/sample or more)
- Discounted vet charges (70% of cost up to \$6/sample will be reimbursed; 50% of shipping charges)
- Aid in interpretation of results (training of provincial extension and sheep organization personnel in genotyping results paid for through project)
- Access to National Database via internet including 'Market Place' page for selling tested animals

Also offered through the project is reimbursement of \$5 per sample for samples analyzed between June 2003 and June 2005 (animal registration number and copies of official lab for 1 to 3 codons required).

There are also spaces still available for participants in the **Scrapie Flock Certification Program Pilot Project.**

For more information about both projects contact the Scrapie Project Coordinator at 519-836-0043; email admin@scrapiecanada.ca.

New Deadlines for the Scrapie Flock Certification Program Pilot Project

Beth Kyle, Ontario Sheep Marketing Agency

In June and July of 2005, information packages describing the Scrapie Flock Certification Program (SFCP) pilot project were sent to producers whose names were put forward by the provincial organizations and the Canadian National Goat Federation. Although producer interest among this group was gauged to be high, only 9 producers were enrolled in the project by October 2005. Not all provinces met the allotted quota for interested producers (see table below) and the project is now accepting names from all interested producers regardless of province. During the fall of 2005, preference will still be given to producers from provinces that have not filled their original allotment. However, in order to collect meaningful information and

to meet progress requirements set out by the funding agency, producers need to be enrolled in the program for as close to the duration of the five-year project as possible.

Therefore, beginning December 1st, project spaces will be filled on a ‘first to apply-first to be enrolled’ basis regardless of producer province. It is very important that the spaces on this project are filled, not only to create worthwhile data, but also to send a clear message that scrapie control is considered an important issue within the sheep and goat industries.

For more information please contact the Scrapie Project Coordinator at 519-836-0043 (email: admin@scrapiecanada.ca or info@scrapiecanada.ca).

The Scrapie Flock Certification Program (SFCP) helps producers to determine whether scrapie exists within their sheep or goat operation, and minimizes the risk of introducing the disease into clean flocks or herds. It consists of a set of national standards developed by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency in collaboration with industry. In the future, meeting SFCP standards may be required for exporting breeding stock. The pilot project is a preliminary step in introducing the SFCP. The pilot project is funded by federal and industry programs to subsidize the implementation of the SCFP in 60 sheep flocks and 10 goat herds across the country to determine program costs and practicality.

Producer participation and interest in the SFCP pilot project (September 2005)			
	Enrolled	Interested producers	Original Provincial Allotment
BC	0	1	6
AB	1	8	12
SK	0	5	6
MB	0	6	6
ON	6	19	12
QC	1	1	12
NB	0	1	1
PE	0	1	1
NS	0	0	3
NF	0	0	1
Goats	1	11	10
Total	9	53	70

The SFCP pilot project is partly funded by Agriculture and Agri-Food’s Advancing Canadian Agriculture and Agri-Food (ACAAF) Program.

Obex Removal Workshop

Nadine Funk, Ontario Sheep Marketing Agency

As part of the Scrapie Flock Certification program (SFCP), the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) and OSMA partnered to deliver an obex removal workshop for Ontario producers participating on the program and their veterinarians. The obex is a portion of the brain routinely used in the lab analysis for scrapie in sheep and goats. As producers on the

SFCP must submit samples from all mature sheep dying on farm, collecting only the obex rather than submitting the entire head reduces shipping and lab costs.

A total of 7 producers, along with Jonathan Wort and Nadine Funk from OSMA participated in the workshop in August. Jennifer Sperry, a summer student employed by the CFIA to gather obex samples led the demonstration.

During the interactive 2 hour workshop, participants watched a demonstration of the procedure and were shown a variety of tools that can be used to perform the procedure. Following the demonstration by Jennifer, each participant had the opportunity to practice the technique using several different tools. Afterwards there was some general discussion about the Voluntary Scrapie Flock Certification program and its requirements.

Another workshop is being scheduled for October 27th, just prior to the OSMA Annual General Meeting. Producers, provincial extension staff and sheep organization representatives have been invited to attend. It is hoped that representatives from other provinces will be able to set up similar clinics in other provinces.

Canadian Sheep Industry Scrapie Genotyping Survey To Be Expanded

Beth Kyle, Ontario Sheep Marketing Agency

The National Scrapie Genotyping Survey has recently been expanded to include all sheep registered under the Canadian Livestock Records Corporation (CLRC). The project started accepting samples in June 2005, with participation restricted to members of the Canadian Sheep Breeders Association (CSBA). With the expanded eligibility, producers of Katahdin, Finnsheep, and any commercial producers wishing to test registered stock will be able to sample their animals under this federally funded project. With lower than anticipated numbers of samples submitted in the first few months of the project, it is hoped that the expansion will boost the number of producers sampling. “This is a unique and time-limited opportunity for producers to test their breeding stock at a discounted rate,” states Jonathan Wort, General Manager of the Ontario Sheep Marketing Agency. “Producers should definitely take advantage of this project while funding is available.”

Scrapie is a prion disease affecting sheep and goats. Although harmless to humans, scrapie is fatal to sheep and goats and carries the stigma of falling within the high profile Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathy (TSE) family. As with all TSE's, there is currently no reliable test that can be performed on live animals. Variations in the genetic make-up of sheep, however, are linked to how easily animals will become infected if exposed to the disease. By genotype testing, it is possible to determine which animals are genetically resistant to scrapie and will pass that resistance on to their lambs. Along with most other sheep producing countries, the Canadian sheep industry has made a commitment to reducing the occurrence of scrapie through selective breeding for disease resistance.

Although similar projects have been initiated in several provinces, this is the first nationally available genotyping project in Canada. Largely funded by Agriculture and Agri-food Canada's Advancing Canadian Agriculture and Agri-Food Program (ACAAF), the project is supported by many national and provincial sheep organizations. “We firmly believe that acting now to reduce

the occurrence of scrapie within the national flock is a necessary step for our industry” says Murray Emke president of the Canadian Sheep Breeders Association. “We are very pleased that we can open the project up to a greater number of producers than we originally thought possible.” Mr. Emke views the expansion to include all registered stock as very positive, moving the project to more closely parallel the USDA scrapie program. The Canadian project was already uniquely inclusive with a major goal of maintaining production standards while improving scrapie resistance by sampling ewes as well as rams.

The Genotyping Survey offers producers the opportunity to sample as many registered animals as they wish at a discounted rate for both analysis and veterinarian fees. A simple blood sample is all that is needed to receive genetic results from three codons of the prion gene indicated in scrapie resistance. Other benefits of sampling through this program include interpretation of results and inclusion of results within the national database found on the website <https://genenovas.ca>.

For more information about this project, please visit our website (www.scrapiecanada.ca) or contact the Scrapie Project Coordinator (telephone: 519-821-2796; email: admin@scrapiecanada.ca)

What’s New?

- Samples from all sheep registered with CLRC are now accepted.
- Reimbursement of \$5 per sample for samples analyzed between June 2003 and June 2005 extended to include results on only one codon (previously required two codons) Animal registration number and copies of official lab are required.
- Members of the Manitoba Sheep Association have initiated a demonstration project using specially designed ear tags to collect tissue samples for genotype analysis. As the tissue sample is sealed in a tamper-proof container labeled with the same identification number as the animal tag, vets are not required for sample collection. Producers in other provinces who wish to use ear tags for sample collection should contact the Project Coordinator.

National Institute for Animal Agriculture’s ID INFO EXPO

Jennifer Fleming, Executive Director

At the ID Info Expo in Chicago researchers, conducting tag trials in the United States had the opportunity to share their results. Based on the results provided (<http://animalagriculture.org/Proceedings/2005IDproceedings.asp>), some of the sheep industry representatives indicating that RFID tags are not up to the task of a national tracking system; saying that they are “problem-prone and costly”. Despite the success of the RFID tags in Quebec, some Canadian producers might agree with that statement.

One of the key learnings to come out of the research that has been conducted in the U.S., which can be applied to any tag that is used, is that the *placement* of the tag is incredibly important. Animals with improperly placed tags run a higher risk of infection. And, ewes seem to be more prone to infections since they do not have a tendency to stand still while being tagged, making it harder to get the tag in the right place. Tag placement is also a huge issue with respect to

readability and scanability, since sheep tend to flock together and keep their heads down; making scanning large groups difficult.

Researchers in the US are also wondering if the weather conditions under which animals are tagged influence infection rates. Do animals tagged on raining/snowy days have a higher rate of infection?

In terms of the cost of RFID tags and traceability, a comment was made that the USDA is a long way from understanding what is being imposed on the industry and that the government is not even aware (nor is the sheep industry) of what the cost is going to be to the industry. The same can be said for the Canadian industry.

It was estimated by one Montana researcher that the sheep industry is looking at an annual cost of \$20 per cow equivalent per sheep for an ID system. This is based on an average of 1.5 lambs/ewe; \$1.50/tag; \$1.50 for data management. It has been reported that RFID tags, time to install/read, private database (similar to the CLIA database) and infrastructure may cost the U.S. industry over \$15 million per year; which is five times the cost of their lamb check off.

Based on the information that has been gathered, the Sheep ID Working Group recommended that the industry use a Lot or Group ID system and that the visual scrapie ID tags continued to be used and improved upon.

The privately owned, animal movement database which is being proposed by the cattle industry is approximately 30 days away from being tested and the goal is to have it active by the end of January 2006. The database would be paid for by a levee on the tags, which has been estimated to cost \$0.50-1.00 per head. Realistically though, they are hoping the cost will work out to be \$0.20-0.40 per head once more producers are using the database. While cross-commodity discussions regarding the database are not currently occurring, the concept is based on a 10 member non-profit board with the organization of a for-profit business. The current costing structure would cost the ASI approximately \$2 million (that is just for the database and does not include the tagging and readers required).

Zoning Canada

Jennifer Fleming, Executive Director & Matt Taylor, Canadian Animal Health Coalition

The Canadian Animal Health Coalition (CAHC) is implementing a *ZONING* project, such that, Canada will have an operational east-west zoning capability at the Ontario-Manitoba border by late 2006. Zoning would be applied at the discretion of Canada's Chief Veterinary Officer, presently Dr. Brian Evans, in the event of highly virulent diseases that spread quickly and have the potential for significant impact to the economy of the food animal industry, and even the country as a whole.

The West Hawk Lake Zone Border Project is the result of some 10 years of consultation between industry and other stakeholders, and provincial and federal governments. The Project was approved this spring, by Minister of Agriculture, Andy Mitchell. It is being implemented as a collaborative initiative between industry, AAFC, CFIA and the provincial governments of Ontario and Manitoba. Essentially, the project enables Canada to begin the process of having an

effective zoning capability, starting with a 2-zone system, and following in the direction already taken by the Netherlands (17 zones) and the US (50 state-based zones).

In the event of an outbreak, the border would be used to effectively divide Canada into two regions for controlling foreign animal disease outbreaks, e.g. the 'disease-free' zone and an 'at-risk' zone. In accordance with OIE guidelines, a survey can establish the disease-free status of the disease-free zone, and exports can resume to those trading partners that are following the OIE guidelines. The result is that Canada can resume exports – from the disease-free zone – in a much shorter period of time after an outbreak than could occur in the absence of zoning.

With respect to the economic benefits of zoning, a study conducted by Serecon Management Consulting Inc. determined that an effective East – West zoning capability – together with effective disease control measures -- reduces the direct impact of just a small-scale outbreak of foot and mouth disease (FMD) by an estimated \$700 million, and, another \$700 million at the processing level. Indirect impacts, including the tourism sector, increase the anticipated savings to over \$5 billion. This scenario is considered something of an under-estimate however, both the savings attributed to effective zoning and the overall extent of an outbreak of FMD in Canada are expected to be significantly larger.

West Hawk Lake (WHL) was chosen as the ideal site for an initial zoning initiative in Canada after several years of study. The location is one of several potential sites, however, WHL offers the largest potential economic return, and -- with only 1 road and 2 rail lines connecting East and West across several hundred kilometers of barren land – it is the most effective geographic and environmental barrier to disease in the country.

What is of greater importance to the sheep industry, however, is that the location offers minimal commercial impact. During a non-outbreak period livestock can move freely from one zone to another, however, animal movement data will be captured at West Hawk Lake. This means that there will be a paper record and an electronic record of every animal movement across the border, acquired and maintained through the industry's evolving identification and movement information systems. The information collected will enable authorities to trace necessary livestock and animal products that have crossed the border, should there be a foreign animal disease outbreak.

Currently a Zone Border Committee has been established. This Committee has been tasked with overseeing the implementation of a zone border authority by December 31, 2006. The Committee will also: reach an agreement (in principle) on a zone funding strategy and cost allocation formula; conduct a regulatory review and regulatory changes / amendment; develop a detailed plan for meeting zone database requirements; develop a stakeholder communications strategy and; define and incorporate a governance and corporate structure for the West Hawk Lake Zone Border Authority.

Prudent use of antimicrobials in small ruminants

France Lanthier, National On-Farm Food Safety Coordinator

Antimicrobial resistance occurs when an antimicrobial agent is ineffective in the treatment of an illness or disease it previously treated. Antimicrobial resistance (AMR) can be acquired through spontaneous mutations in the genetic code of microorganisms making that

microorganism resistant to the antimicrobial agent. Over-use or inappropriate use of antimicrobial drugs can lead to AMR by increasing the natural selection of resistant microorganism strains. Antimicrobial resistance is a major concern for public health as an increasing amount of virulent bacteria cannot be treated with conventional antibiotics.

In his 1945 Nobel prize acceptance speech (for the discovery of Penicillin), Sir. Alexander Fleming offered the following warning: “It is not difficult to make microbes resistant to penicillin in the laboratory by exposing them to concentrations not sufficient to kill them, and the same thing has occasionally happened in the body”¹.

Antimicrobial resistance can be passed along in a variety of methods: genes from resistant populations of microorganisms can be exchanged directly with genes in animals or humans, genes from resistant microorganisms can be passed to humans through the food we eat.

Extra-label or off-label use of veterinary drugs

If there are no approved products for a specific disease condition, or if approved products are deemed ineffective by the veterinarian, he or she can prescribe a non-approved drug or an approved drug at a different dose in effort to treat the disease. The veterinarian must have established a Veterinarian-Client-Patient relationship, be available for follow-up consultation, and must calculate a reasonable withdrawal time to ensure that residue contaminated meat does not enter the food chain.

Due to the few antibiotics approved for use in sheep, extra-label or off-label use of antibiotics is common in the sheep industry. As described in the Food-Safe Farm Practices (FSFP) manual, **Extra Label Drug Use (ELDU)** occurs any time that a product is:

- Administered to species not listed on the label;
 - Used to treat diseases and conditions that are not listed on the label;
 - Used at a different dosage than those stated on the label;
 - Administered using a route, frequency, duration or timing of treatment not listed on the label;
- or
- Administered to animals being shipped for slaughter before the stated withdrawal period

Why is extra-label use of veterinary drugs a concern for AMR: especially for sheep producers?

As previously mentioned, antimicrobial resistance can be acquired if antimicrobial drugs are administered at a dosage too low to kill the bacteria, if the drug is not taken for a period of sufficient length, or if a drug is not administered for the right condition. Since many drugs used to treat common illnesses in sheep are used extra-label. The risk of acquiring AMR is higher for livestock treated with ELDU than for other livestock commodities, where medications have been tested in that species and are indicated to treat a specific condition in that species.

More often than not sheep producers must rely on the expert opinion of their veterinarian who in turn is relying on research data that has been extrapolated from other species, most often cattle. Although veterinarians have access to a wealth of information on drug withdrawal periods through efforts such as the global Food Animal Residue Avoidance Databank (gFARAD

<http://www.cgfarad.usask.ca>), there is still a level of guesswork involved when prescribing extra-label.

In the US, it is estimated that \$45 million worth of sheep each year is lost from disease conditions for which therapeutic medicines are unavailable. Extra-label use of veterinary drugs is unavoidable in the sheep industry. Prudent use of antimicrobials should therefore be further emphasized as our industry cannot afford to lose the efficacy of the few drugs it can currently use.

Role of the on-farm food safety program in managing the use of antimicrobials

While extra-label use of antimicrobials is difficult to avoid in the sheep industry, participating in the Food-Safe Farm Practices program can assure that prudent use and due diligence are exercised (Table 1).

Table 1. Using the FSFP program to manage antimicrobial use

FSFP Record	Information Required	How antimicrobial management is improved
1. Animal Health Product Treatment Record	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Treatment date, animal or pen ID., condition treated, product used, dose/frequency, route of administration, withdrawal date 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By identifying and keeping records of animals treated we can assure that only affected animals are treated – not only reducing the risk of AMR but reducing the cost by not treating healthy animals Keeping track of withdrawal dates assures that due diligence has been exercised in assuring that there are no residues in the meat
2. Sample Veterinary Prescription	Patient ID, treatment, instructions for use, prescription expiry, withdrawal recommendations	By following the veterinarians recommendations for the length of treatment and dosage, the producer demonstrates due diligence especially extra-label use of medications
3. Problems and Corrective Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What was the problem? How was the problem controlled? What can be done to prevent the problem from occurring again? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementing corrective actions can prevent further risk of AMR. Example: A medicated feed is accepted without the proper label AMR issue: healthy animals are exposed to antibiotics and may acquire resistance. Corrective action: Request proper label from the company and retrain personnel on acceptable labels for

		medicated feeds.
4A. Animal Health Products Inventory 4B. Medicated Feed Inventory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location of purchase, amount purchased, DIN#, expiry date, storage location, disposal comments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keeping track of the expiry date of a medication is especially important. An expired drug can have reduced effectiveness and increase the risk of AMR by not eliminating the bacteria being treated. • Proper disposal is important. Disposing of drugs in the sink or garbage can result in drug exposure. Consult your veterinarian or pharmacist for proper disposal.
10. Record of Training	Documents that personnel has been trained to perform tasks and that training has been verified	Assures that all personnel has been trained in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • drug administration • record keeping • corrective action protocols • medicated feed mixing • animal shipping protocols

For more information on the Canadian Sheep and Lamb Food-Safe Farm Practices call 1-888-684-7739, email france@cansheep.ca or visit the new FSFP website for online training @ <http://fsfp.cansheep.ca>

¹ <http://nobelprize.org/medicine/laureates/1945/fleming-lecture.pdf>

Canadian Livestock Identification Agency Update

Jennifer Fleming, Executive Director

The Canadian Livestock Identification Agency's (CLIA) proposed repository model for livestock health emergency management purposes not only covers Premises Identification (see September edition of *From the Flock*), but will also encompass full livestock traceability. What this means is that the animal movements between registered premises will be reported and recorded in a central data warehouse.

While some of the finer details of the central data warehouse continue to be worked on, what is known is that when the process is complete there will be a National Livestock Traceability System in place that will be managed and maintained by the CLIA on behalf of its member organizations. The data that will be housed in the warehouse will include the date of all movement events from one premises, to another and the movement of an animal (or group of animals) across an international border or between disease management zones (e.g., West Hawk Lake). For individually identified animals, reportable events will also include:

- Activation of identifier
- Retirement of identifier

- The export or death of identified animals
- Carcass disposal
- Loss of identifier
- Replacement of identifier

A consequence of this, is that no livestock will be moved onto (or born on) a premises which has not been registered as a livestock premises in Canada.

The performance target for the system will be to record (report) all movements of livestock between premises within 48 hours of the movement occurrence. During the implementation phase, the requirement will be for all movements of livestock, between premises, to be reported within 7 days. Co-mingling sites though, will be required to report within 48 hours.

The CSF will be driving the implementation timeline for the sheep industry reaching these standards.

Once the system is fully functional, implementation will be phased in over time through three groups of livestock sectors:

- Those that are currently regulated (under the Health of Animals Act) for mandatory identification
- Those that are currently active members of the CLIA (with the expectation that they will build national traceability programs) and,
- Other livestock species groups.

Access to the data will be restricted to authorized personnel only.

New wool brand for China

A New Zealand scoured wool brand will be marketed in China for the first time in a move designed to increase share for this type of wool in the rapidly growing China market. New Zealand's largest wool exporter New Zealand Wool Services International Ltd (WSI), launched the Purelana brand of scoured wool at the annual Nanjing Wool Market conference in China late last month.

Managing director of WSI Michael Dwyer says the new brand takes advantage of the company's capacity to anticipate and deliver to specific customer requirements in an expanding market.

“China takes 65% of the Australian wool clip but only 19% of New Zealand's. With the shift of manufacturers from Western Europe to China in search of lower labour inputs, this is set to increase for both countries - but particularly for New Zealand.

Dwyer says it would also be advantageous to increase the New Zealand share of wool imported to China, which stands at 13%.

Development of the Purelana brand is designed to capitalise on this fast-growing market, especially as Chinese manufacturers become more quality conscious.

“Our technology enables us to offer a comprehensive package, leaving the trader mentality in the distant past,” he says.

“Manufacturers need absolute compliance, consistency and repeatability in their purchases, and they need the right wool for the job. Purelana identifies our scoured wool as meeting all these requirements.

“All our scoured wool marketed to China will be covered by the Purelana brand. Purelana incorporates quality assurance, signifying the wool is 100% New Zealand sourced and guaranteeing that it is scoured to the company’s strict environmental standards.”
Use of top quality raw material and what WSI calls “superior scouring processes” ensures high consistency in colour, strength and purity, which improves the capacity for Purelana to take dye relative to other wools.

“We have carefully studied our customers’ buying patterns and will offer a range of wool types specifically to meet the industrial demands of, for example, tufted carpets or axminster carpets,” Dwyer says.

“Every Purelana shipment will be covered by an extensive warranty, and include a detailed testing certificate, incorporating length and colour measurements.”

Purelana wool will be produced exclusively at either of the two state-of-the art scours that are majority-owned by WSI at Kaputone north of Christchurch and Whakatu, Hawke’s Bay.

“Our scouring quality, efficiency, and environmental compliance are arguably the best in the world and the fact we have two scours gives considerable economy of scale.

“It makes sense for buyers to buy scoured wool from us, rather than greasy, unscoured wool, which has fewer guarantees and less specifications,” says Dwyer.

Purelana wool will carry distinctive red band packaging on every bale, and is approved by Wool Interiors to use the Wools of New Zealand brand.

<http://www.ruralnews.co.nz/article.asp?channelid=141&articleid=9850>

NFUS concerned about cost and red tape of new sheep tagging proposals

The National Farmer's Union of Scotland (NFUS) has told the Scottish Executive that new rules regarding the tagging of sheep and recording of movements must deliver clear animal health benefits.

The NFUS made its comments in response to an Executive consultation on new rules likely to come into effect in mid-November. The union has two particular concerns over the proposals which it believes would add cost and red tape for no animal health benefit.

An EU regulation came into force in July requiring all sheep born after that date to be tagged by nine months of age, or earlier if they are moved.

The NFUS accepts that as the way forward but has concerns over the Executive's proposal for retrospective tagging. It proposes that all sheep in Scotland are tagged by 31st December even if they haven't moved off their holding of birth.

Vice-president Bob Howat said the NFUS recognised that all sheep would eventually move and therefore need tagging. However, they questioned the sense in rounding up these sheep in the next three months for tagging when it may be many years before they move off their holding of birth.

The second concern was the proposal that every farm holding must have a separate set of movement records. Mr Howat said the NFUS believed that was only necessary where sheep were kept as separate flocks on different holdings.

"Averting the threat of double tagging and individual recording has been a huge relief. However, the Executive still has to make changes to the rules to implement other aspects of the regulation. But, in doing so, it must be absolutely certain it is not adding extra cost for no benefit.

"The proposal to back-tag sheep in the next 12 weeks is completely unnecessary. The disease traceability issue that is the driver for the EU regulation regards animal movements.

"There will be hundreds of thousands of sheep that won't move off their holding of birth for years, so rushing to bring them all in and get them tagged by the end of the year will be a practical nightmare, costly and deliver no animal health benefit.

"The Executive and industry have worked closely and successfully on sheep ID rules so far. As long as that continues, we should be able to work through these concerns."

http://www.nfus.org.uk/about_index.asp