

## In this issue:



▶ Cysticercus Ovis ..... 1-2

▶ Food Safety ..... 2-3



▶ Scrapie Canada ..... 4

▶ News From Around  
the World ..... 5-7



▶ Bluetongue Insurance  
Program ..... 8-12

▶ New National Animal  
ID Coordinator ..... 12



# From the flock

MAY 2008 • VOLUME 5 • ISSUE 5

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FOR THE CANADIAN SHEEP INDUSTRY

## Canadian Sheep Federation's Response to Cysticercus Ovis

By Jennifer Fleming, Executive Director CSF

Over the past six months hardly a month has gone by where Cysticercus Ovis (C. Ovis) has not been a topic of at least one edition of From the Flock, or your provincial magazines or newsletters. While C. Ovis is not new to the Canadian sheep industry, this year has seen a substantial increase in the number of lamb carcasses condemned in Canada. This parasite is continuing to infect Canadian sheep and negatively impacting the profitability of the entire industry.

The Canadian Sheep Identification Program (CSIP) was established by CSF as a trace back system to address producer concerns relating to sheep health, to prevent and control the spread and impact of diseases, to provide safe food to consumers and to maintain access to the domestic and international markets.

Although not a federally reportable disease, C. Ovis is affecting the sheep industry with the increase in condemned carcasses having a severe negative economic impact.

As the presence of the parasite cannot be detected until slaughter, the entire production chain is impacted from the processor back to the producer.

The CSIP was established to deal with such an event. The CSF has implemented a confidential process through which the tag numbers of full carcasses condemned (in this case for C. Ovis) will be provided to the CSF. On a strictly confidential basis, designated persons at CSF will provide the farm of origin information to a veterinarian. Whenever possible either a CFIA or provincial government veterinarian will be contacted.

The veterinarian will contact the farm of origin, again on a strictly confidential basis, to report that a carcass originating on their farm has been condemned for C. Ovis and to answer any questions the producer may have as to the cause and methods of preventing C. Ovis. The goal of this confidential program is to provide producers with the information they need to reduce the infection rate.



## C. Ovis continued

Having only designated persons at the CSF and veterinarians involved in the tracing of the carcasses and contacting the producers will allow producer information to remain confidential and ensure that no punitive action is taken against the producer.

To ensure that the CSIP program operates as it is intended, CSF is strongly encouraging you to keep complete and accurate records for ALL animals moving off your premises, including tag numbers, date of movement and their destination.

If you have any questions with respect to this policy please contact the CSF office at 1-888-684-7739 or [jennifer@cansheep.ca](mailto:jennifer@cansheep.ca)

## Canadian Perceptions on Food Safety

By Lorraine Stevenson, On-Farm Food Safety Coordinator

In 2004, Ipsos-Reid conducted a market research study of 1600 Canadians for Agriculture and Agrifood Canada. The purpose of the study was to benchmark Canadian consumer perceptions and attitudes related to food safety and quality. A second wave of the study was completed in 2006, to track significant changes among Canadian consumers. A telephone interview of the main or joint grocery shoppers was conducted. Within the results, we can see some interesting attitudes about food safety and how we can relate these perceptions to primary agricultural producers.

Food safety is definitely on the minds of Canadian consumers. When buying food, confidence in its safety was reported as being the most important factor to 63% of consumers.

Overall, consumers have a positive view of the farming sector and the food safety practices used on-farm. Only 14% of participants report that they believe food safety problems would occur at the farm level. Most Canadians believe that food safety issues are most likely to occur at the processing level (37%). Restaurants placed second (16%), and agricultural production placed third (14%) as a source of food contamination.

The majority of Canadians have the impression that the overall quality of food produced in Canada is better compared to food produced in other countries, with 47% reporting they feel it is a lot better in quality, and 45% reporting they believe it is somewhat better in quality. When asked why they feel that Canadian produced food is better in quality versus food produced in other countries, 29% stated that Canada has better production standards or practices, and 16% stated that Canada has more rules and regulations than other countries.



## Food Safety continued

Although rules and regulations are generally not viewed favourably by those who must implement them, consumers are aware of them and they do help increase confidence in the food supply. Consider this encouragement to implement on farm food safety practices and keep your records current and organized.

Another interesting result of the study revealed that primary production ranks third (14%) in what comes to mind when consumers think about food safety. Food processing and handling practices ranked first (30%), and standards and regulations ranked second at 20%. It is interesting to also note that consumers relate food safety with specific concerns such as animal diseases, bacterial and chemical contamination, and food handling and processing practices, especially cleanliness and hygiene.

Managing animal disease was ranked as the most important factor in maintaining consumer confidence in the safety of Canadian-produced food, followed closely by managing the concern of hormones, antibiotics, and chemicals in plants and animals.

When participants were asked “What food safety topics or information, if any, would be most beneficial to you?” 18% answered they would like more information about agricultural production. In the province of Quebec, 27% answered they would like more information about agricultural production.

In fact, most Canadians say they know a lot about food safety guidelines in the home, but are not very familiar with guidelines in other sectors of the food chain. Approximately half (48%) of consumers say they are familiar with food safety guidelines on farms, and only 15% claim to know a lot about on farm food safety practices.

Alberta (57%) and BC (54%) residents are the most likely to say they know some or a lot about food safety guidelines for farms, while Ontario (57%) and Atlantic Province (58%) residents are most likely to say they know nothing or very little about these practices.

Some generalizations and conclusions can be drawn from these statistics and applied to the farm situation.

- Canadian consumers are aware of food safety and it is important to them.
- Most Canadians have a positive view of the role of agriculture in food safety.
- Canadian consumers have some idea about food safety as it relates to agricultural practices, but would like to know more.
- The majority of Canadians feel that we lead the way over other countries in terms of food safety.

For the most part, this study reveals a positive picture of agriculture and how it relates to food safety. As producers, let us continue to be diligent to maintain that confidence by implementing practices to produce the safest food possible. If you would like a copy of the full study results, or more information about CSF's Food Safe Farm Practices Program, please contact me at [lorraine@cansheep.ca](mailto:lorraine@cansheep.ca).



# Recognizing the Signs of Scrapie

By Courtney Denard, National Scrapie Coordinator

*The following information was taken from the Canadian Food Inspection Agency and the United States Department of Agriculture's websites.*

It is important for producers to be able to recognize the signs of scrapie on their farm. As these can vary, producers must be aware of the different symptoms so they know what to look for and how to respond to the situation. According to the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA), scrapie is slow to develop, usually taking more than a year and a half for clinical signs to appear in an infected animal. In some cases however, it has been known to take up to eight years to develop, but typically, cases occur in animals between two and five years of age. Once an animal appears ill, it will die in one to two months.

The CFIA says that symptoms vary between cases of scrapie. One may observe an older animal with changes in general behaviour such as aggression or apprehension, tremors, incoordination or abnormal gaits. However, scrapie can also present itself as a mature poor-doing animal with a poor wool coat or even simply as a found dead.

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) agrees that signs of scrapie vary widely among individual animals and develop very slowly. They say that due to damage to nerve cells, affected animals usually show behavioral changes, tremor (especially of head and neck), rubbing, and locomotor incoordination that progresses to lying down and death.

The USDA sights early signs such as subtle changes in behavior or temperament. These changes may be followed by scratching and rubbing against fixed objects, to relieve itching. Other signs are loss of coordination, weakness, weight loss despite retention of appetite, biting of feet and limbs, lip smacking, and gait abnormalities, including high-stepping of the forelegs, hopping like a rabbit, and swaying of the back end.

The USDA also says that an infected animal may appear normal if left undisturbed at rest. However, when stimulated by a sudden noise, excessive movement, or the stress of handling, the animal may tremble or fall down in a convulsive-like state.

According to the USDA, producers should be aware that several other problems can cause clinical signs similar to scrapie in sheep, including the diseases ovine progressive pneumonia, listeriosis, and rabies; the presence of external parasites (lice and mites); pregnancy toxemia; and toxins.

Scrapie can be present in both open and closed flocks and herds. It must be understood that just because a flock or herd has been closed does not mean that scrapie may not be present. It is important for producers to pay close attention to their animals and investigate any odd behaviour or sudden behavioural changes that may occur.

In Canada, scrapie is a reportable disease under the federal Health of Animals Act, and a control program exists to prevent its spread. As scrapie is a reportable disease, any suspect scrapie case must be reported to a CFIA veterinarian immediately.

If, at any time, you suspect that scrapie may be on your farm, contact your local CFIA veterinarian. You can find your local Canadian Food Inspection Agency District Office on the CFIA web site at: [www.inspection.gc.ca/english/anima/heasan/offbure.shtml](http://www.inspection.gc.ca/english/anima/heasan/offbure.shtml) or by consulting the blue pages of your local phone directory.

Both the CFIA and the USDA offer further info about scrapie on their websites as well. The USDA's website shows a number of videos related to scrapie, including clinical signs of scrapie and footage of an infected sheep. These videos can be found on the USDA website at: [www.aphis.usda.gov/animal\\_health/animal\\_diseases/scrapie](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_health/animal_diseases/scrapie)

More information about scrapie can also be found by contacting Scrapie Canada at 1-866-534-1302 or by e-mail at [admin@scrapiecanada.ca](mailto:admin@scrapiecanada.ca).



## News From Around the World

### Meatworks to close, 466 jobs on line

Reproduced from: [Manawatu Standard, www.stuff.co.nz](http://www.stuff.co.nz)

#### **The PPCS sheep and lamb processing plant at Oringi, is set to close within six months.**

PPCS plans to close its Oringi sheep and lamb processing facility near Dannevirke, which employs 466 staff. Workers at the southern Hawke's Bay works were told of the decision at a meeting at the plant this morning.

Chief executive Keith Cooper said the proposed closure was part of the company's "right-sizing programme" - aimed at aligning the company's processing capacity to current and projected livestock availability. "Today we began a consultation process with our employees and their representatives at the plant. A final decision is expected within the next fortnight once that process has concluded," he said.

"We understand that this news is unwelcome for our employees, their families and the Dannevirke community. "The decision follows a careful review of our sheep processing operations, livestock trends and industry processing capacity.

"This is an industry that is suffering from poor returns and the threat of alternative land uses, and PPCS must and will continue to make hard decisions to give security to the business and its shareholders going forward." Mr Cooper said that, under the proposal, the Oringi processing facility would not reopen and the plant would be decommissioned, a process expected to take around six months. He also said that the company would "make every practical effort to assist our employees through the change and where possible offer alternative employment at our other processing facilities where vacancies exist".

The proposal to close the site reflected the trend of declining sheep numbers and increasing sheep processing capacity in the North Island during a period of sustained strength in the NZ dollar, he said. "Over the next three years, sheep numbers in the North Island are expected to drop by more than 500,000, while in the past two years industry processing capacity has been increased by an additional two million head.

Mr Cooper said the proposed closure was no reflection on the commitment and skill of the workers at Oringi. "However the actual cost of production at the site was not competitive or sustainable." The company was evaluating the future of operations across the business.

The Rightsize programme was part of the company's strategy to return PPCS to its traditional profitability over the next 18 months, he said. From next season, starting in October 2008, all PPCS' North Island sheep processing would occur at its Takapau and Waitotora facilities.

The closure was likely to be a huge blow to Dannevirke, with the district still recovering from job losses at the Norsewear clothing plant in 2007 and the Feltex carpet plant in 2006. Tararua District Mayor Maureen Reynolds said PPCS' decision to close the plant was "devastating". It had always been a worry for the district, Ms Reynolds said. "If there is anything sure in the meat industry it is change." She said the decision "came out of the blue" and would be dreadful for the workers.

The closing of the plant would have "huge effect" on the community. NZ Meat Workers and Related Trades Union Incorporated general secretary Dave Eastlake said today the union expected more closures around the country in the coming months. "We are aware there has been a reduction in stock numbers, so we are aware that some closures would be inevitable."

He said the workers were disappointed but remained realistic that they had to move on. Mr Eastlake said the workers needed a final decision to be made. Union representatives would be available at the plant for workers. One eye witness said workers were in tears as they left the meeting. National's Wairarapa MP John Hayes, and Tikitiki MP Craig Foss, said the decision to close the plant was "absolutely devastating for the region".

"The odds have been stacked against our region's exporters, and now workers and their families are paying the price," they said. "We will work with Work and Income, budget advisory services, and any relevant organisations and agencies to help local families deal with this devastating blow as best they can," the MPs said.



## Lamb kill predicted to fall five million in five years

Reproduced from: The Press, [www.stuff.co.nz](http://www.stuff.co.nz)

Sheep farms could be without five million lambs in the next five years as the aftershocks of poor prices, drought and dairy conversions take effect.

The bleak outlook from early computer modelling by Meat & Wool New Zealand would remove nearly one-sixth of the 32.3m lambs killed last season. Large meat processor PPCS expects the processing industry will probably be down 2m new lambs in the coming season. Meat & Wool New Zealand's chairman, Mike Petersen, said it was difficult to know if the lamb kill would be down by this much.

But initial modelling for a five-year forecast was for an even smaller lamb crop, he said. "Over five years quite likely there could be five million lambs (fewer). We have to look past this season and look where we are going in five years."

Large numbers of breeding stock, including replacement ewe lambs, were continuing to be killed. Fewer lambs would put pressure on the processing industry because restructuring of meat plants was inevitable, Petersen said. "If there are five million lambs less that is quite a lot of killing capacity that will need to be taken out of the industry."

Farmers can be expected to wear the cost if this happened and eventually the consumer would also, Petersen said.

Federated Farmers president Charlie Pedersen said the loss of so many lambs at about \$80 a head would remove a lot of money from the economy.

## China adopts strict food safety law

Reproduced from [Globe and Mail](http://GlobeandMail.com)

In Beijing's food industry, the penalty for causing serious indigestion could be incarceration.

With the Olympic Games only 14 weeks away, the spotlight is falling on dinner plates and food carts in the Chinese capital. Amid promises from municipal officials that athletes and audiences would be guaranteed safe food during the Games, China has published its new draft food safety law, which lays out penalties from fines to life in prison for makers of substandard food.

According to the draft, producers of substandard food products would face fines, the confiscation of their incomes and revocation of production certificates. In serious cases, they could face prison terms ranging from three years to life. The draft law has recently been published for comment.

While it is being tweaked, a city official said in a news conference Thursday that Beijing, "has established a comprehensive food safety control mechanism that covers the whole process, from production to the table, to make sure Olympics food is entirely safe," Ma Lin, director of the Beijing Municipal Science and Technology Commission said in a report by the official news agency Xinhua.

Ma said the city has established 25 local food safety standards since 2002 and has chosen nine farms in greater Beijing as designated sources of major food products, such as meat and vegetables, for the Games. Olympic-destined food produced in other cities and provinces is inspected under the same strict standards, he said.

A food tracing system based on bar codes will identify the origin, processing and even the seeds from which vegetables were grown and sources of livestock used for meats, Ma said.

"We had a trial of the food produce tracing system in the 2007 Special Olympics World Summer Games held in Shanghai. It was a success," Ma said.



## Canadian labeling system undermines competitiveness

### Canada's food labeling system jeopardizes industry innovation and competition, according to the former head of the Canadian Food Inspection Agency.

Speaking before the House of Commons committee, Robert Doering said that slow regulatory approval processes and lax requirements for products using the "Product of Canada" label undermine competitiveness for food and drink companies.

For manufacturers to use the Product of Canada label, only 51% of production costs need to be incurred in Canada. Costs covering the import of food and drink, such as expenses for labor, transportation and packaging, can be included in this.

This means companies hoping to avoid the Canadian regulatory system can source their ingredients and produce the food from outside the country, but still claim it as Canadian.

"It significantly undermines innovation. It significantly undermines competition," said Doering, according to Canwest News Service.

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) told FoodNavigator-USA.com said it was unable to comment on the matter, but said the Canadian prime minister pledged last December to review the labeling requirements. A date has not yet been announced for this.

Eating locally produced food is an increasing trend in both North America and Europe. According to a report by The Hartman Group conducted in the US December 2007, 73% of the 796 people questioned said they currently bought products they perceived to be locally made or produced.

### PRODUCT OF CANADA

People are showing more ethical consumerism, with concerns of transport affecting the environment for example, meaning people are keen to know the origin of their food, and to buy local. Similarly, recent safety concerns of imports from countries such as China have also fuelled the growing trend.

However, current regulations mean a product can be labeled as coming from Canada even when 49% of production elsewhere, theoretically, consumers could be misled when purchasing such products.

Doering reportedly said labels such as Grown in Canada or Prepared in Canada would offer greater clarity to consumers.

Doering said reforms should be made with a straightforward directive to the CFIA, saying: "Do not engage in the black hole of food regulations. You could get into a mess by tinkering with the regulatory regime."

### SLOW REGULATORY SYSTEM

Doering said manufacturers avoid producing food and drink products inside Canada because of its approval process.

"Many countries don't even want to go through our regulatory approval processes here so they produce things outside Canada," Canwest quotes him as saying in an interview.

"It undermines competitiveness because Canadians have to meet a different standard than people with imported products. It also undermines investment because we have such a slow regulatory change system."



# Canadian Sheep Federation Launches Bluetongue Insurance

## NEWS RELEASE – First Generation of Insurance for Bluetongue Disease in Sheep

GUELPH - The Canadian sheep industry has taken an innovative step to protect sheep farmers in the event of an outbreak of Bluetongue (BT) disease. BT Insurance for Sheep is a new commercial insurance program developed by the Canadian Sheep Federation (CSF) with the assistance of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's Private Sector Risk Management Partnerships (PSRMP) Program.

The BT Insurance program will provide sheep farmers with affordable insurance coverage for mortality, business interruption and consequential losses due to Bluetongue Disease – an insect borne viral disease of sheep. This voluntary insurance program will supplement funding provided to sheep farmers through current government agricultural assistance programs.

The impetus for development of BT Insurance was provided by recent import policy changes introduced by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency coupled with the discovery of Bluetongue disease in the United Kingdom and in several Northern European countries.

The Private Sector Risk Management Partnerships (PSRMP) Program is a federal initiative that offers financial and technical assistance to producer organizations for new agricultural risk management projects.

## QUOTES

“We hope that Bluetongue disease does not affect Canada’s sheep industry, but if it does, this new program will ensure that sheep farmers will have a tool that will allow us to recover our losses.” – *Murray Emke, Sheep Producer*

“This Government is committed to working in partnership with industry groups through the Private Sector Risk Management Partnerships (PSRMP) Program to provide farmers with the security they need to remain competitive. We applaud the Canadian Sheep Federation for its new insurance model that will benefit both the sheep industry and Canadian agriculture as a whole.” – *Gerry Ritz, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food and Minister for the Canadian Wheat Board*

“This innovative, affordable insurance is designed to provide sheep farmers with peace of mind by protecting them in the event that Bluetongue disease appears on their farm.” – *Florence Henning, Chair of the CSF, Mayerthorpe, AB*

“We are stepping up our efforts to manage on-farm risk so that the Canadian sheep industry is at the forefront in disease risk management. In this regard we were pleased to work with the BMS Group, who have supported the development program from the outset. Their extensive experience and market relationships have been invaluable.” – *Jennifer MacTavish, Executive Director, CSF*

## FAST FACTS

- There are over 11,000 sheep farmers in Canada (Source: [www.cansheep.ca](http://www.cansheep.ca))
- The value of farmed sheep in Canada is over \$300M (Source: Statistics Canada, 2006)
- There are approximately 70,000 head of registered purebred sheep in Canada representing 48 different breeds (Source: [www.cansheep.ca](http://www.cansheep.ca))



## Bluetongue Insurance continued

### ABOUT THE CSF

- Established in 1990, the Canadian Sheep Federation is a national non-profit organization that represents all Canadian sheep producers.
- Our mission is to work closely and cooperatively with all levels of government and industry-related organizations, both domestic and foreign, to further the viability, expansion and prosperity of the Canadian sheep and wool industry.

### ABOUT BLUETONGUE DISEASE

- Bluetongue disease is caused by the Bluetongue virus. It is a non-contagious, insect-borne disease of mainly sheep and less frequently of cattle, goats, buffalo, deer and antelope.
- Symptoms can include high fever, excessive salivation, swelling of the face and tongue. Swelling of the lips and tongue gives the tongue its typical blue appearance, though this sign is confined to a minority of the animals. Recovery can be very slow.

### ABOUT PRIVATE SECTOR RISK MANAGEMENT PARTNERSHIP (PSRMP)

- The Private Sector Risk Management Partnerships (PSRMP) Program of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada is a federal initiative offering financial and technical assistance to producer organizations for new agricultural risk management projects.
- PSRMP looks for projects that deal with predictable risks which may represent a significant threat to an individual farm operation but generally only a minor risk to the sector. These projects focus on risks that are not currently covered by government programs or the private sector.
- Canadian national, regional or provincial producer organizations representing member-producers who are directly involved in the production of agricultural products are eligible to apply for assistance.

### ABOUT OUR INSURANCE PARTNERS

- Bluetongue Insurance is provided by the Echelon General Insurance Company in conjunction with their partners Sylvite Financial Services Inc. and administrative broker The Precept Group Inc.
- The Precept Group Inc.: Insurance and Risk Management was formed in 1998 with the merger of three well established insurance brokerage firms, with roots going back to 1912.



## Bluetongue Insurance continued

### ABOUT OUR INSURANCE PARTNERS

- Sylvite Financial Services Inc. is a division of the Sylvite Group of Companies, one of Canada's largest diversified agricultural services companies. Initially formed to meet the risk management needs of the farmer, Sylvite Financial Services Inc. has evolved into an innovative and dynamic financial services firm with deep roots in the agricultural markets.
- Reinsurance will be provided by Endurance Reinsurance of America (Endurance Re), a Delaware domestic insurer and reinsurer with policyholders' surplus of \$592,863,197 as of December 31, 2007. Endurance Re is a subsidiary of Endurance Specialty Holdings Ltd., a Bermuda-based specialty provider of insurance and reinsurance on a global basis, with over 700 employees. Endurance Specialty Holdings Ltd. is publicly traded on the NYSE (ticker symbol: ENH) with \$7 billion in assets and over \$2 billion in shareholders' equity.

### TO LEARN MORE

#### **Sheep Industry:**

Jennifer MacTavish  
Executive Director  
Canadian Sheep Federation  
130 Malcolm Road  
Guelph, ON  
N1K 1B1  
Phone: 1-519-824-6018  
Fax: 1-866-909-5360  
Website: [www.cansheep.ca](http://www.cansheep.ca)

#### **Bluetongue Disease:**

Dorothy W. Geale, B.Sc.(Hons) PhD., DVM  
Senior Staff Veterinarian  
Foreign Animal Disease, Animal Health Division  
Canadian Food Inspection Agency  
Unit 203 185 King street  
Peterborough, Ontario  
K9J 2R6  
Phone: 1-705-750-4962  
Cellular: 1-613-614-768  
Fax: 1-705-750-4963

#### **Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada:**

Media Relations  
Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada  
Ottawa, Ontario  
Phone: 1-613-759-7972  
Toll free: 1-866-345-7972

*Agriculture and Agri-food Canada is pleased to participate in the production of this program, and is committed to working with our industry partners to increase public awareness of the importance of the agri-food industry to Canada.*



## Bluetongue Insurance Backgrounder

- The Bluetongue Insurance Policy for Sheep is a new commercial insurance program that provides producers with affordable coverage for mortality, business interruption and consequential losses due to Bluetongue (BT). This voluntary program will supplement but not replace funding provided to sheep farmers through government agricultural assistance programs. Bluetongue Insurance was developed by the Canadian Sheep Federation with the assistance of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's Private Sector Risk Management Partnerships (PSRMP) Program.
- Impetus for development of a new insurance program was provided by recent policy changes initiated by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA). On July 10, 2006, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) announced that it was revising its Bluetongue (BT) Import Policy, "...based on an updated scientific risk analysis, to eliminate currently bluetongue-related control measures for cattle, sheep and other ruminants imported from the United States" to enable the CFIA to fulfill its international reporting obligations to trading partners and the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE).
- Not long after the CFIA's announcement, BT was discovered in Northern Europe. On August 18, 2006, BT was found in Kerkrade, the Netherlands and a few days later, German and Belgian authorities confirmed cases in their territories, near the Dutch border. The disease then spread into France and, eventually, into the UK. The number of confirmed cases in the UK is reported to be 70. When the BT outbreak first struck Europe, officials were not certain what serotype (group of micro-organisms or viruses) of the disease was infecting the animals.
- There are 25 known BT serotypes, five of which occur in North America (2, 10, 11, 13 and 17). The serotype that caused the outbreak in Europe in August, 2006, was serotype 8. This serotype has never been reported in Northern Europe before, which means that the disease occurring in Northern Europe is considered to be of exotic origin. It is believed that this serotype is of a sub-Saharan lineage, although the precise origin is not yet known, nor is the way in which the virus was introduced into Europe.
- A recent article entitled "Climate change and the recent emergence of Bluetongue in Europe" suggest that the unprecedented spread of the disease further north in Europe "...has been driven by recent changes in the European climate that have allowed increased virus persistence during winter".
- In this context, the Canadian sheep industry began developing a mechanism that would make sure that Canadian sheep producers were covered for losses in the event of a Bluetongue outbreak. The result is the Bluetongue Insurance Policy for Sheep.
- Bluetongue insurance will cover participating producers for: mortality; consequential loss (drugs and treatment materials; veterinary fees; diagnostic fees; humane euthanasia) and; business interruption (loss of productive capability, additional feeding and management costs).
- Acknowledging that not all of the 25 serotypes of BT have been removed from the CFIA's reportable disease list, the policy has been designed in such a way that producers who have coverage, and have been diagnosed with any of the 25 serotypes of BT, will receive compensation above and beyond CFIA compensation.



## Backgrounder continued

- The BT Insurance Policy for Sheep is affordable for producers. Coverage will cost 0.55% to 1.78% of the sum insured, depending on the province of residence.
- Insurance coverage for 2008 is available for producers beginning in April 2008.
- Additional details on Bluetongue insurance products for sheep farmers including information on how to apply is available from the Canadian Sheep Federation at [www.cansheep.ca](http://www.cansheep.ca).

## Contact Us ...



130 Malcolm Road  
Guelph, Ontario  
N1K 1B1

**Tel:** (519) 824-6018

**Toll Free:** 1-800-684-7739

**Fax:** 1-866-909-5360

**Email:**  
[jennifer@cansheep.ca](mailto:jennifer@cansheep.ca)

**Website:**  
[www.cansheep.ca](http://www.cansheep.ca)

## News From the CSF

### Canada's Sheep and Goat Industries Hire New National Animal ID Coordinator

Wednesday, May 7, 2008 – Guelph, ON – The Canadian Sheep Federation (CSF) and the Canadian National Goat Federation (CNGF) announced today the hiring of a new National Animal Identification Coordinator. Sean McKenzie will fill the position beginning May 12, 2008.

McKenzie comes to the role from the BC Ministry of Agriculture and Lands, where he worked in the Food Safety and Quality Department as the FSQ Systems Specialist. Additionally Sean worked with the Traceability Initiative and was involved with industry and government programs for Animal Identification, Age Verification and the Industry Government Advisory Committee.

The position was originally filled by France Lanthier who had made the switch to National Identification after being the Food Safety Coordinator for 2 years.

"The CSF welcomes Sean and believes that the experience he brings to the table will be a great asset" says Florence Henning, Chair of the CSF. She adds, "The decision to leave was a tough one for France, but we know she is excited about the new opportunities before her. We wish her all the best in this next phase of her career."

Chairperson of the Goat National Traceability Committee Susan Barker states, "We look forward to Sean working with us. While our time working with France was short we will miss her and wish her the very best".

This position is being funded by the Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada. The CSF is a national, non-profit organization with the mandate to further the viability, expansion and prosperity of the Canadian sheep and wool industry. For more information contact the Canadian Sheep Federation at 1-888-684-7739 or [jennifer@cansheep.ca](mailto:jennifer@cansheep.ca).

The Canadian National Goat Federation is a non profit national organization representing the national interests of goat producers and the industry. For more information call 1-613-347-2230 or email [info@cangoats.com](mailto:info@cangoats.com)