



27 June 2005

AWI trials natural alternative to mulesing

A pain-free alternative to mulesing moved a step closer this week with news of the first successful trials of a prototype needle-free injection device for a natural mulesing protein being developed by Australian Wool Innovation Limited (AWI).

Norwood Abbey - one of four specialist companies AWI has contracted to develop a practical and cost effective injection device for the natural mulesing protein - has successfully trialled a handheld prototype injection device on sheep skins.

In addition, AWI Chief Executive Officer Dr Len Stephens said that preliminary trials on sheep using the needle-free prototype gave the equivalent results as conventional needle delivery.

"This is really exciting news and we will now be moving into proof-of-concept trials for this particular injection device next month," he said.

"AWI is investing more than \$1.5 million on this project and we are absolutely committed to investing whatever is required to make the product commercially available in the shortest possible time."

Ongoing development of the University of Adelaide natural mulesing protein - a collagenase formulation - is also being stepped up with the first field trials to be held this spring.

"We know that this naturally occurring protein delivers the same result as mulesing by removing the wool follicles and stretching bare skin across the breech area of the sheep," Dr Stephens said.

"These trials - in addition to the Norwood Abbey proof-of-concept trials - will be invaluable in seeing how this could work in a practical, commercial application."
The final product could be commercially available as early as 2007.

The natural alternative to mulesing development is just one of a broad suite of AWI research, development and innovation projects aimed at finding an alternative to mulesing and better flystrike prevention and control.

"We are working with commercial companies and researchers both in Australia and overseas to get a practical alternative to Australian woolgrowers as quickly as possible."

Related Links

<http://australianwoolgrowers.com.au/>