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SA's tough new OJD measures



THE South Australian Government has imposed new trading rules for sheep entering SA to control Ovine Johne's Disease (OJD).

From July 1 this year, a completed national Sheep Health Statement will be a mandatory requirement for movement of sheep into and within the state, and vaccination of sheep for OJD without whole of flock testing will no longer be a pathway for entry into SA.

In a statement, SA Agriculture Minister Gail Gago said the tougher measures have been endorsed by a national technical committee, the Sheepmeat Council and Wool Producers Australia, and would include ongoing monitoring for disease, control measures on infected farms and entry conditions for sheep entering the state.

The trade in terminal lambs and sheep consigned direct to abattoirs will be unaffected by the changes.

Interstate producers will still be able to sell sheep through approved SA saleyards and special provisions will be in place for interstate sheep wanting to attend livestock shows or artificial breeding establishments in SA then return to their state of origin.

"I am very proud of the work done by Biosecurity SA and our primary industry sector to ensure South Australian livestock have such low levels of Johne's Disease – around one per cent for OJD – and commend the industry for the work done to combat this insidious disease," Ms Gago said.

But the announcement and its timing yesterday has angered the Victorian Farmers Federation.

"The VFF has been requesting this information for months to ensure our state's producers are prepared for changed trading requirements," VFF Livestock president Ian Feldtmann said.

"The July 1 deadline has been industry-wide knowledge for at least seven months.



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“To announce changes to trade requirements just 17 days before the deadline is unrealistic for Victorian producers.

“They’re demanding Victorian producers prove their flocks have tested negative to OJD in the past two years.

“This begs the question – are South Australia imposing the same trade requirements within their own state?”

Mr Feldtmann also questioned the figure of SA having OJD levels of around one per cent, as cited by Ms Gago.

He said it was “a well-known fact that there is a much higher level of OJD in the South Eastern area.”

“To generalise about a state-wide average is questionable in practical terms,” Mr Feldtmann said.

“What proportion of the state’s flocks has been tested to the same requirements that South Australia are now imposing on Victorian flocks? Let’s see the results for flocks sold across SA’s south east.

“What the SA Government has done is take us back to the dark old days of onerous OJD rules and regulations, rather than letting producers and the market determine what level of assurance they want when buying sheep.”

<http://www.queenslandcountrylife.com.au/news/agriculture/livestock/sheep-general/sas-tough-new-ojd-measures/2659837.aspx?storypage=0>