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## Tri-Solfen could be available for shearers to use during wound stitching in the next 12 months — for 15 to 30c a procedure, says Animal Ethics



Relief for sheep: Administering pain relief to sheep prior to stitching would cost 15 to 30 cents per procedure according to Animal Ethics, the company that developed anaesthetic/antiseptic Tri-Solfen.

**ADMINISTERING pain relief for sheep during wound stitching could cost as little as 15 cents per procedure.**

Animal Ethics, the company which developed anaesthetic/antiseptic Tri-Solfen alongside partner Bayer, says work is under way to make the drug available more accessible to shearers.

Providing the drug to animals prior to wound stitching procedures would cost as little as 15 to 30 cents, according to Animal Ethics.

Animal welfare group Animals Australia this week called for mandatory anaesthetic to be used during “painful procedures” on sheep.

The push comes on the back of a tumultuous week for the Australian wool industry plagued with claims of cruelty after the release last week of video footage taken inside shearing sheds.

People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals revealed two videos of shearers punching, hitting and throwing sheep during visits to 19 sheds across Victoria, South Australia and NSW.

The footage depicted shearers sewing up severely cut sheep without anaesthetic, prompting Animals Australia to label the act “equally abusive” as punching the animals.

Executive director Glenys Oogjes said pain relief during minor procedures should be mandatory “because of the distress and suffering (drug-free stitching) causes”.



Victorian shearing contractor David Kemp, of Shear Unreal, on Tuesday raised concerns over the cost of administering pain relief to sheep.

He said the move could double or even triple wool producers’ operational costs and harm the wellbeing of sheep.

“People wouldn’t be able to pay for shearing so you’d have animals walking around with two or three years’ growth on them,” he said on Tuesday.

“They would get flystrike because farmers couldn’t afford to shear them.”

But Animal Ethics managing director Allan Giffard said Tri-Solfen, used solely for lamb mulesing, had already become more accessible to farmers.

The drug, previously only administered by veterinarians, is now sold through Landmark stores after registration changes.



Mr Giffard said extending the registration further could soon make the drug available for shearing wounds, castration and tail docking.

“If the shearer unfortunately made a cut and he would then apply (Tri-Solfen) immediately,” he said.

“It starts to numb the area as soon as it touches the skin so by the time the shearer starts stitching the sheep isn't in pain.”

Shearing Contractors Association spokesman Jason Letchford this week supported pain relief in Australian shearing sheds, saying drugs should be made available to shearers.

He said the wool industry, over the past 100 years, focused on overall wellbeing rather than pain relief for sheep.

“... maybe we got it wrong,” he said. “We're taking the issue of cutting more seriously in the industry.”

Mr Giffard said the wheels were already in motion to extend the use of Tri-Solfen. He is hopeful the drug will be available for minor procedures in the next 12 months.

<http://www.weeklytimesnow.com.au/business/sheep/trisolfen-could-be-available-for-shearers-to-use-during-wound-stitching-in-the-next-12-months-for-15-to-30c-a-procedure-says-animal-ethics/story-fnker8up-1226991991779>