

RDAR Sheep Producer Questionnaire

Lameness in sheep can be a significant health and economic issue in some flocks. The most common cause of lameness is assumed to be footrot, an infectious bacterial disease of the soft tissues of the foot. If untreated or non-responsive to treatment, affected animals are typically culled. Outbreaks of the disease can occur, particularly if animals are housed in cold and wet or muddy environments. The disease is highly contagious, and the bacteria can survive in the soil for some time, making control difficult and expensive. Years ago, a footrot vaccine was available in Canada from Europe called Footvax®. This vaccine is no longer available in Canada. Your opinion is important to the sheep industry to help gather industry baseline information to determine whether lameness and in particular footrot is a significant health issue in Alberta sheep flocks. The results of this survey will determine future directions in research in sheep, including whether Alberta research dollars should be invested in Canada to develop an effective footrot vaccine for sheep.

The Alberta Lamb Producers would appreciate it if you would complete this survey that is funded by RDAR (Results Driven Agriculture Research). This survey is voluntary, and your responses will be kept confidential. **For completing the survey your name will be entered into two producer lotteries for \$500 each and we will send you a copy of the final results of the survey. Please complete this form and return it by email to joyce@drjvd.com by December 31, 2021.** If you have any questions about this survey, please contact Dr. Joyce Van Donkersgoed at joyce@drjvd.com.

Date of survey completion (DD/MM/YYYY):

Which type(s) of sheep do you raise? (Check all that apply)

dairy for milk production

meat

dairy and meat

What part of Alberta do your sheep reside?

south

central

north

If you raise meat sheep, do you sell your lambs at or shortly after weaning or feed and finish to slaughter weight?

sell lambs at or shortly after weaning

raise and feed to slaughter weight

do not raise meat sheep

Estimated number of sheep on your farm currently:

ewes

pre-weaned lambs

rams

post-weaned lambs

Rank the following diseases from 1 to 7 based on your level of concern in your sheep flock: (1 being most important).

pneumonia
diarrhea
parasites
reproductive issues e.g., lambing issues, abortions, infertility
lameness
nervous diseases
other diseases (list):

From the 7 available options, please use the pull-down menu on your right to select the diseases in your sheep that you use the most antimicrobials to treat, prevent and control diseases in your flock (1 being the largest use of antimicrobials).

1
2
3
4

From the seven available options, please use the pull-down menu on your right to mark the top 2 causes of lameness in your sheep flock.

1
2

Last year, approximately what percent of sheep in your flock did you treat for footrot? E. g., treated 5 ewes out of 100 ewes in flock = $5/100 = 5\%$ treatment rate.

breeding ewes
breeding rams
pre-weaned lambs
post-weaned feeder lambs
do not know

When after weaning, is footrot most commonly observed in your feeder lambs?

few weeks after weaning
middle of the feeding period
end of the feeding period
highly variable during feeding period
do not know
sell my feeder lambs at or shortly after weaning

How common are outbreaks of footrot in your sheep flock? (Outbreak = treating greater than 10% of the animals in a group e. g., pen or pasture within a week).

never
frequent (greater than 2 per year)

occasional (1-2 times per year)
do not know

Do you see footrot more commonly in older (greater than 3 years) ewes/rams than in younger ewes/rams?

older (>3 years) younger same in both do not know

From the sixteen available options, please use the pull-down menu on your right to rank the top 4 most important factors that increase the risk of footrot in your sheep flock (1 being the most important).

1
2
3
4

If you have both dairy and meat sheep, do you observe more footrot in your dairy sheep than your meat sheep?

dairy meat same in dairy and meat do not know do not have dairy and meat sheep

Last year, what is your estimated culling rate % from footrot in your sheep flock? I. e., 1%, 5%, 10% (e. g., culled 2 rams out of 5 rams on farm for footrot = $2/5 = 40\%$. Culling means shipping animals to slaughter prior to shipping similarly aged animals within the flock).

breeding ewes
breeding rams
pre-weaned lambs
weaned lambs
do not know

Last year, what was your estimated death rate % from footrot in your flock? I. e., 0.5%, 1%, (e. g., 1 out of 100 sheep = $1/100 = 1\%$ were euthanized or died from footrot).

sheep do not know

What season do you most commonly observe footrot issues in your sheep?

winter spring summer fall highly variable

From the seven available options, please use the pull-down menu on your right to rank the top 4 most important factors that affect the economic costs of footrot in your sheep (1 being most important).

1
2
3
4

How effective do you think antimicrobials are to treat footrot in your sheep?

minimally effective moderately effective highly effective

From the seven available options, use the pull-down menu to rank the 3 best treatments for footrot in your sheep flock: (1 being most effective in treating, preventing/controlling disease).

1
2
3

During the last year, what antimicrobials did you use to treat footrot in your sheep? (Check all that apply).

penicillin e.g., Depocillin®, Procillin®
tetracycline e.g., Biomycin® 200, Liquamycin LA-200®, Oxyvet® 100 LP
potentiated sulfonamides e.g., Borgal®, Trimidox®
macrolides e.g., Draxxin®, Micotil®, Zactran®, Zuprevo®
fluoroquinolones e.g., Baytril®, Forcyl®, A180®
florfenicol e.g., Nufloor®, Florkem®, Resflor®, Fenicyl®
other (describe):

Have you ever used an autogenous vaccine i. e., vaccine made from bacterial isolates from your flock or other local flocks to prevent/control footrot in your sheep?

yes no not sure

If yes, do you believe the autogenous vaccine reduced disease rates for footrot in your sheep?

yes no not sure

Have you ever used a cattle footrot vaccine e.g., Fusogard®, to prevent/control footrot in your sheep?

yes no not sure

If yes, do you believe the cattle Fusoguard® footrot vaccine reduced disease rates in your sheep for footrot?

yes no not sure

If a footrot vaccine for sheep were available in Canada, would you use it?

yes no not sure

If no or not sure, why not? (describe):

From the ten available options, please use the pull-down menu on your right to rank the top 4 most important attributes that you would want in a footrot vaccine for your sheep (1 being the most important attribute).

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4

What is the maximum annual price per head that would be cost-effective for you to pay for a footrot vaccine for your sheep?

< \$1 annual vaccine regime (single or double dose)

\$1 to \$2

\$2 to \$3

\$3 to \$4

would depend on the vaccine's effectiveness, but would need to be at least a cost break-even

What size of dosage vials of footrot vaccine would work best for your sheep operation based on the size of your flock? (Assumes that opened bottles of vaccine must be used the same day; else remainder discarded).

single dose

10 doses

50 doses

mixture of 10 dose and 50 dose vials

From the eight available options, please use the pull-down menu on your right to rank the 4 most important factors that would limit the use of a sheep footrot vaccine in your flock (1 being the most important factor).

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4

If you had the choice between purchasing an imported footrot vaccine from Europe or purchasing one made in Canada from Canadian bacterial isolates, please use the pull-down menu on your right to rank the top four factors from the eight available options that would most likely determine your choice of which vaccine to use (1 being most important).

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4

Any additional comments that you would like to share with us about footrot in your sheep flock which is important to you and would help reduce disease risks and costs of the disease for you and the sheep industry?

Thank you for your participation in this survey!

Please provide your name, address, and email below so we can enter you into two producer lotteries for \$500 each and send you a copy of the results. Thank you!

Name:

Farm Name:

Mailing address:

Email: