

ALBERTA SHEEP

The Western Canadian Flock Health Program

Quality Health Care for Producers, Designed by Producers

The Concept

- Animals that are unhealthy raise fewer lambs and simply cost more to have on the farm than they are worth. By being “intensive” about animal health, producers will put more money into their bank accounts instead of into problem animals.
- Health practices that are practical and that work.
- The program offers standardized health practices that are objectively assessed by a program certified veterinarian.
- Joining the program offers a marketing advantage for producers selling breeding stock since their animals are inspected by a certified veterinarian.

The Process

- The program was developed by the Alberta Sheep & Wool Commission in partnership with industry stakeholders including: purebred producers, commercial producers, a feedlot, veterinarians, government researchers, and a food processor.
- The goals of the program are:
 1. meet producer’s needs (i.e. reduce losses related to health problems)
 2. be acceptable to international health and trade requirements
 3. be voluntary and simple to use
 4. give a significant trade advantage through promoting a superior product
 5. blend in with an active Scrapie surveillance program

The list of diseases targeted include: Johne’s, Maedi Visna, Caseous Lymphadenitis, *Chlamydia psittaci* abortion, Vibronic abortion, Foot rot, external and internal parasites, Brucellosis (epididymitis of Rams) and Scrapie.

Program Features

- **Four management levels** (AA, A , B and BMP), that reflect how much work a flock owner does to manage or control disease in their flock and how open the flock is to outside sources of contamination.
- **Four risk levels** (minimal, low, moderate and high). The program makes an assessment of the risk of each disease in the flock based on flock history, veterinarian inspection, and the management level of the flock.
- **Veterinary Inspection** – all levels except BMP. The program requires a yearly veterinary inspection (done by a program-certified vet) that includes a questionnaire, a flock inspection, plus an inspection of the facilities.



- **Certificate** – The certifying veterinarian will sign a certificate indicating your management level and will complete a flock assessment form that indicates your flocks risk of disease for each disease monitored by the program.

Joining the Program

If you would like more information about the Western Canadian Flock Health Program please contact the ASWC office at (403) 948-8533 or info@absheep.com