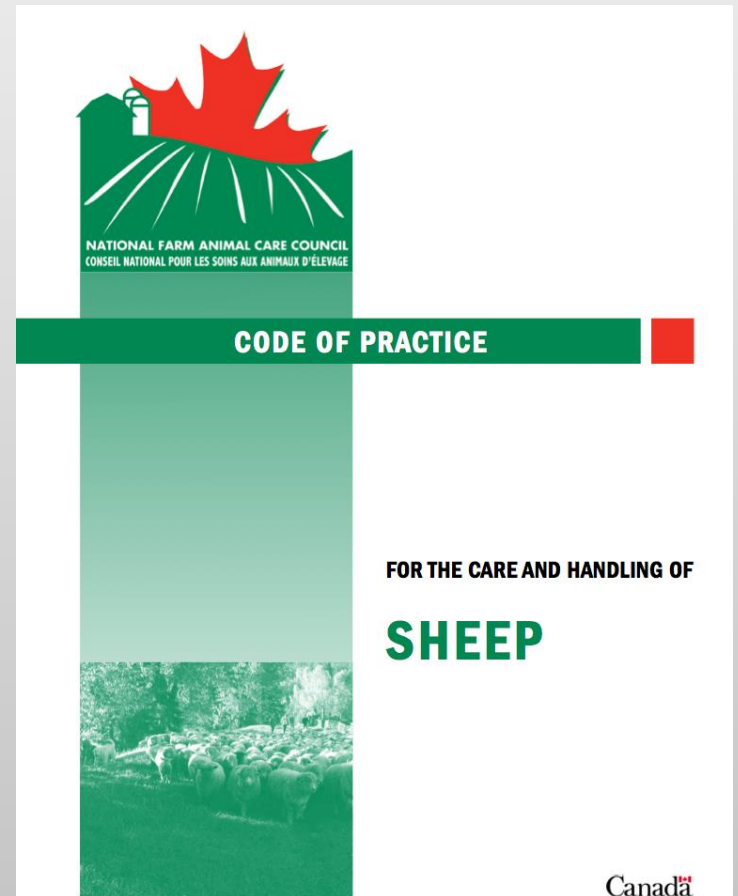


**Deciphering
the Codes...
What do they
mean and how
do they affect
me**



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www.livestockhandling.net

BC Sheep Oct. 2015



Buffalo Hills Livestock (est 2005)
Purebred Southdowns

Why worry about good animal welfare?

- Because it is the right thing to do.
- When the animal is experiencing good welfare, they will reward us with optimum production.
- Our customers, consumers and society in general expect us to raise our animals with the greatest care and respect.
- And ... Because by law we have to!

It is our obligation as livestock producers to provide the appropriate level of care to ensure our animals environment is one where they experience minimal stress through optimal care.

“The Duty of Care”

If you are responsible for an animal, you have a duty of care for that animal, regardless of why you are responsible for the animal, the animal's purpose or how long you will care for the animal.

Animal Welfare



By simple definition, animal welfare is the “state of being” that the animal is experiencing.

State of Being

Means how an animal is “coping”
with its environment.



Environment

Housing and Facilities

Nutrition

Health Care

Husbandry

Humane Handling

Facilities:

Protection from weather

Safe

Provide safe interaction with other animals

Protection from predators

Sufficient space

Nutrition:

Clean, accessible water

Balanced diet appropriate to animals circumstance

Health feedstuffs

Health:

Vaccination and prevention programs

Early detection and treatment

Appropriate treatment

Active euthanasia

Husbandry:

“Maintenance” Practices:

Shearing

Hoof Trimming

Tail Docking

Dehorning

Socialization

Reproductive practices

Predator Control

Humane Handling:

Handled in a low stress manner

Utilizes a sheep's natural behaviour for movement

Appropriate handling facilities

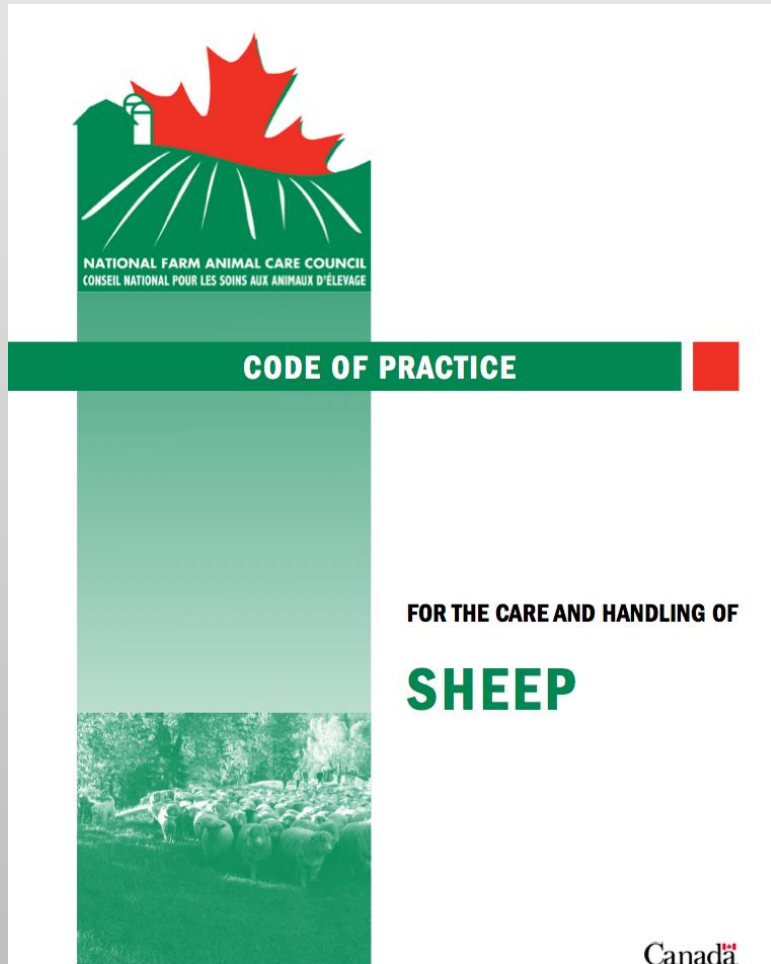
Appropriate restraint

Appropriate handling tools

No abusive handling

**An animals welfare is
gauged on how each of
these aspects are being
managed.**

These are the basis of the Codes of Practice



Updated in 2013

**National Farm Animal Care
Committee (NFACC)**

Developed by Committee

Public Review

Purpose:

Set acceptable standards - for all parties

Extension tools

Reference material for regulations

Foundation for animal care assessment program

Inclusive of:

Currently Acceptable Production Practices

Facility Design

Specific guidance documents (ie. BCS)

Requirements and Recommendations

This Code is not intended to describe all production and management practices relevant to each stage of sheep production. Instead, principles applicable to all sectors of the industry are presented, along with some sector specific considerations.

Requirements

These refer to either a regulatory requirement, or an industry imposed expectation outlining acceptable and unacceptable practices and are fundamental obligations relating to the care of animals. Requirements represent a consensus position that these measures, at minimum, are to be implemented by all persons responsible for farm animal care. When included as part of an assessment program, those who fail to implement Requirements may be compelled by industry associations to undertake corrective measures, or risk a loss of market options. Requirements also may be enforceable under federal and provincial regulation.

The Sheep Code has more requirements than any of the other species (200+) - twice as many as horses which has the second highest number.

VERY OVERWHELMING!

Recommended Practices

Code Recommended Practices may complement a Code's Requirements, promote producer education and can encourage adoption of practices for continuous improvement in animal welfare outcomes. **Recommended Practices are those which are generally expected to enhance animal welfare outcomes, but failure to implement them does not imply that acceptable standards of animal care are not met.**

Simplistic interpretation:

Requirements you are expected to
implement on your farm.

Recommendations are suggested practices.

Good News

**Most of the requirements you are
already doing**

In summary you must:

Educate yourself and employees in sheep husbandry

Provide appropriate shelter (indoor and outdoor)

Design proper handling facilities that wont harm animals

Provide a well balanced and complete diet

Have effective health practices (preventative, diagnostic, treatment)

Provide general maintenance (ie shearing, hoof trimming)

4 High Risk Areas

- 1. Tail Docking**
- 2. Castration**
- 3. Fitness to Transport**
- 4. Euthanasia**

5.7 Tail Docking

4.4.1 Fly-Strike

Sheep affected by fly-strike must receive prompt treatment.

Producers must understand the basic biology of the blowflies that cause strikes.

Producers must determine the relative risk of fly-strike based on:

- predisposing environmental factors
- predisposing sheep traits
- relative risk factors (dags and long tails; wet wool in warm, humid conditions; footrot; open wounds)
- the seasonal presence of blowflies.

Producers must take steps to reduce the attraction of flies to sheep:

- consider the risk of fly-strike in the risk/benefit analysis when deciding to tail dock
- preventing diarrhea or treating it quickly if cases do occur and crutching accordingly
- cleaning and treating wounds quickly
- shearing animals before fly season. Monitor flock for fly-strike as soon as fly season begins and during prolonged damp and humid weather.

Tail Docking

The decision to tail dock must be based on a welfare risk/benefit analysis rather than as a routine; the basis for this decision should be part of the flock health and welfare plan.

Tail docking must be performed by, or under the direct supervision of, competent personnel using proper, clean, sanitized, and well-maintained tools, and accepted techniques.

Tail docking using a surgical technique (e.g using a blade alone) must be done by a licensed veterinarian with anesthesia and analgesia.

Tail docking for lambs **over six weeks of age** must be done by a licensed veterinarian with anesthesia and analgesia.

Rubber rings must not be applied **beyond six weeks** of age.

Docked tails must cover the vulva in ewes and the equivalent length in rams.

Tails must be docked no shorter than the distal end of the caudal fold.

Docked tails must cover the vulva in ewes and the equivalent length in rams.



Tails must be docked no shorter than the distal end of the caudal fold.

Producers must monitor for signs of post-operative complications and take appropriate corrective action.

5.6 Castration

Castration

The decision to castrate must be based on a welfare risk/benefit analysis rather than as a routine; include the basis for this decision as part of the flock health and welfare plan.

Castration is unlikely to be necessary where lambs will be finished and sent to slaughter before reaching puberty.

The procedure should only be carried out where lambs are not likely to be slaughtered before puberty and where it is necessary to avoid welfare problems associated with intact males.

If lambs are likely to be finished in a feedlot they should be castrated at a young age.

Castration must be performed by or under the direct supervision of competent personnel using proper, clean, sanitized and well-maintained tools, and accepted techniques.

Producers must consult with their flock veterinarian who can provide an appropriate pain control protocol for castration.

Short scrotum castration must not be practiced.

<i>Method</i>	<i>Age range</i>
<i>Rubber ring (confinement and semi-confinement systems)</i>	<i>24 hours – 10 days</i>
<i>Rubber ring (pasture lambing system*)</i>	<i>24 hours – 6 weeks</i>
<i>Surgical</i>	<i>24 hours – 4 weeks</i>
<i>Burdizzo (clamp)</i>	<i>1 week[^] – 6 weeks</i>
<i>Surgical</i>	<i>Older than 4 weeks, anesthesia and analgesia required</i>
<i>Burdizzo (clamp)</i>	<i>Older than 6 weeks, anesthesia and analgesia required</i>

* Pasture lambing system – refers to large scale systems where ewes are maintained and lamb on pasture or range

[^] Each cord should be crushed separately. Use caution to avoid crushing the boundary between the two sides of the scrotum. Do not crush the septum or tissue between the testicles.

Producers must monitor for signs of post-operative complications and take appropriate corrective action.

6.1.1 Fitness to Transport

The fitness for transport of every animal must be evaluated within the context of each trip.



Can they handle the rigors of transport?

Transportation Stressors Include:

Handling

Mixing

Fatigue

Environmental

Time off feed/water

Distance

Three questions I ask producers:

- 1. Will it be able to walk off the trailer?*
- 2. Would you eat it?*
- 3. Would you like to see it on YouTube as a product of your farm?*

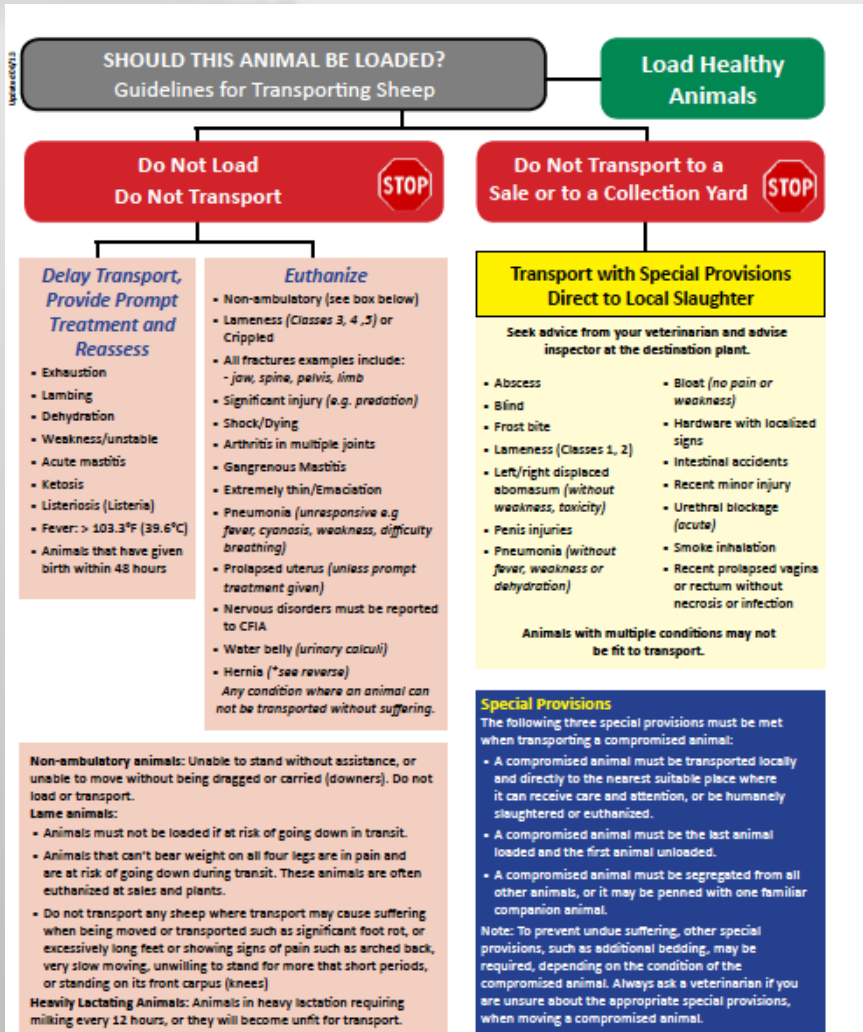
Unfit animals must not be transported, except for veterinary treatment or diagnosis on the advice of a veterinarian.

Compromised animals must not be sent to auction markets or collection yards.

Compromised animals, if transported for slaughter, must go directly to a local abattoir.

Compromised Animal: A compromised animal is an animal with reduced capacity to withstand transportation but where transportation with special provisions will not lead to undue suffering. Compromised animals may be locally transported with special provisions to receive care, be euthanized or humanely slaughtered.

Unfit Animal: An unfit animal is an animal with reduced capacity to withstand transportation and where there is a high risk that transportation will lead to undue suffering. Unfit animals if transported would endure unjustified and unreasonable suffering. Unfit animals may only be transported for veterinary treatment or diagnosis.



Guidelines for Dealing with Compromised Sheep

Federal Transportation Regulations (2012)
Health of Animals Regulations www.inspection.gc.ca

DO

- Segregate animals of different species, or substantially different weights and ages, or if incompatible by nature.
- Provide proper ventilation, drainage and absorption of urine.
- Have sufficient headroom for animals to stand in a natural position.
- Spread sand in the vehicle or have vehicle fitted with safe footholds, in addition to appropriate bedding.
- Ensure that animals unloaded for feed, water and rest remain at least five hours and longer if five hours is not enough, for all animals to receive food and water.
- Ensure that animals segregated in trucks receive extra protection from cold and wind chill; supply ample bedding.
- Euthanize animals promptly when you identify conditions outlined in the "Should this Animal be Loaded?" chart.

DO NOT

- Transport a sick or injured animal where undue suffering may result.
- Transport when the animal is liable to give birth during the journey, unless under the advice of a veterinarian for medical care.
- Continue to transport an animal that is injured, becomes ill, or is otherwise unfit to travel beyond the nearest place it can be treated.
- Use electric prods or goads on sheep
- Load or unload animals in a way that would cause injury or undue suffering.
- Crowd animals to such an extent as to cause injury or undue suffering.
- Transport livestock in trailers unless they are suited for safe handling of that species or class of livestock.

Source: Transporting Livestock by Truck (CFIA)

** this document adapted from Guidelines for Dealing with Compromised Cattle, Sheep and Goats version 03.10

Lameness Classes

These categories can be used to determine the status of an animal's mobility, from normal to non-ambulatory.

Transport as soon as possible

- Class 1**
Visibly lame but can keep up with the group; no evidence of pain.
- Class 2**
Unable to keep up; some difficulty climbing ramps. Load in rear compartment.

Do not Load or Transport*

- Class 3**
Requires assistance to rise, but can walk freely.
- Class 4**
Requires assistance to rise; reluctant to walk; halted movement.
- Class 5**
Unable to rise or remain standing.

**CFIA Livestock
Emergency
Transport Line
1-877-814-2342
(Ontario only)**

* Any animal, including Lameness Classes 3, 4, or 5 may only be transported for veterinary treatment, on the advice of a veterinarian.

Hernias:

Do not transport an animal that has a hernia that meets one or more of the following criteria:

- impedes movement (includes conditions in which the hind legs of the animal touches the hernia when the animal is walking)
- is painful on palpation
- touches the ground when the animal is standing in its natural position, and/or includes an open skin wound, ulceration, or obvious infection.

Sheep with injury or obvious clinical signs of disease must not be sent to auction or other sales.

If it is probable that an animal will give birth during the journey, they must not be transported.

Neonatal lambs unaccompanied by their dam must not be transported off farm until their navel is healed and they reach seven days of age.

6.1.3 Preparing Sheep for Transport

Sheep must be fed within the five-hour period immediately prior to being loaded unless the expected duration of the animal's confinement on the vehicle is less than 24 hours from the time of loading.

Sheep must have access to water until time of loading.

Heavily lactating ewes must be dried off before shipping to auction/collection yards unless they have suckling lambs accompanying them, or are intended for a production/ replacement sale.

Ensure all departing sheep and lambs are identified with an approved Canadian Sheep Identification Program (CSIP) form of identification.



7.0 Euthanasia

7.1 Criteria for Euthanasia (Decision Making)

Sheep must be euthanized without delay if experiencing pain or distress and does not have a reasonable expectation of improvement and or appropriate veterinary diagnosis and treatment is not feasible.

All farms with employees must have a written euthanasia action plan for each phase of production that indicates the criteria for deciding when to euthanize an animal and the appropriate method(s).

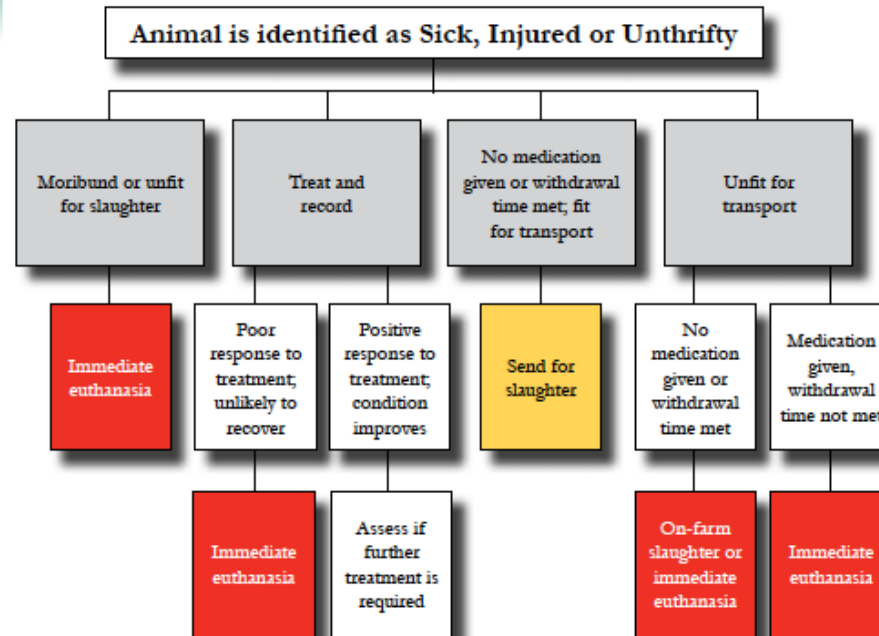
Producers not familiar with euthanasia decision making and/or methods must consult with a veterinarian regarding euthanasia.

All stockpeople must recognize when an animal needs to be euthanized, what method should be used, appropriate tool and who has been designated to perform euthanasia.

Sign	Explanation
Guarding	The animal alters its posture to avoid moving or causing contact to a body part (e.g. not allowing lambs to nurse when mastitis occurs).
Abnormal appearance	Obvious changed posture and a changed profile of the body (e.g. arched back) are all observable signs. Dullness.
Altered behaviour	<p>Behaviour may be depressed; animals may remain immobile, or be reluctant to stand or move even when disturbed. They may also exhibit restlessness (e.g. lying down and getting up, shifting weight, circling, or pacing) or disturbed sleeping patterns. They may grunt, grind their teeth, curl their lips, repeated 'yawning', kneeling, altered gait, stomp, kick at their belly, or reluctance to breed (rams). Exhibit rapid and shallow breathing.</p> <p>Animals in pain may also show altered social interactions with others in their group. (e.g. isolated from flock).</p>
Vocalization	Do not tend to vocalize when in pain.
Mutilation	Animals may bite, shake or rub a painful area, wool chewing, scratching or rubbing.
Inappetence	Animals in pain frequently stop eating and drinking, or markedly reduce their intake, rumination may stop.



Example of Decision Tree for Euthanasia



Examples of criteria for euthanizing sheep

- Weak, unable to stand
- Unable to eat or drink
- Severe injury (e.g. from predator attack)
- Broken leg with exposed bone
- Exposed internal organs
- Moderate to severe lameness
- Rectal or vaginal prolapse (persistent or damaged)
- Severe body weight loss (20% or greater)

Refer to sections 7.0 Euthanasia, 4.4 Sick, Injured or Cull Animals and 6.1.1 Fitness for Transport.

7.2 Methods of Euthanasia

An acceptable method for euthanizing sheep must be used.

The method of euthanasia must be quick, cause minimal stress, pain and result in rapid loss of consciousness followed by death without the animal regaining consciousness.

Every farm must have the ability to euthanize animals (i.e. readily available tools or ready access to someone who does).

All individuals performing euthanasia must have the required skills, knowledge, abilities, access to appropriate tools and be competent to perform the procedure.

All stockpeople must be trained on the Euthanasia Action Plan and associated euthanasia methods.

All equipment used for euthanasia, such as firearms or captive bolt devices must be maintained according to manufacturer's instructions to ensure proper function.

Unnecessary handling and movement of sheep prior to euthanasia must be avoided. **Animals must not be dragged, prodded, forced to move on broken limbs, or made to move when pain and suffering will occur.**

Appendix L b: Euthanasia Action Plan for Sheep and Goats

Methods of On-farm Euthanasia and their Considerations

Method		Human Safety	Animal Welfare	Skills Required	Cost	Other
Overdose by Barbiturate	Intravenous administration of a barbiturate	Restrain the animal	Excellent rating	Proper technique for intravenous injection	Veterinary fee	Can only be administered by licensed veterinarian
Penetrating Captive Bolt	Penetration of the skull and brain by captive bolt, followed with bleed-out by cutting all the main arteries and veins in the neck	Restrain the animal Be cautious of falling or thrashing animals	Good rating Correct cartridge strength, target site and penetration angle on animal is essential	Correct and safe use of captive bolt pistol Correct and safe use of sharp knife	Low - after purchase of captive bolt pistol	Results in some body movement Results in large volume of blood that requires proper disposal
Gunshot	Penetration of the skull and brain by bullet	Restrain the animal Be cautious of falling or thrashing animals Be extremely cautious about bullet ricochet	Good rating Correct size of firearm and ammunition and correct target site and penetration angle on animal is essential	Correct and safe use of firearm	Low – after purchase of firearm	Results in some body movement and blood Requires firearm acquisition certificate Local by-laws may prohibit the use of firearms

Last updated 2008

7.3 Confirmation of Death

If there are any indications of returning consciousness, the euthanasia procedure or an alternate one must be repeated immediately.

Monitor the animal until death is confirmed by lack of respiration, lack of heartbeat and dilated pupils.

Death must be confirmed before moving, leaving, or disposal of the animal.

All carcasses should be disposed of according to all federal/provincial/territorial and municipal regulations.

Interim Sheep Welfare Risk Assessment
 Alberta Lamb Producers have taken the initiative to develop this Interim Sheep Welfare Risk Assessment to allow producers access to funding through the Growing Forward 2 (GF2) Livestock Welfare Producer Program. This interim assessment is intended as a temporary resource until the National Sheep Animal Care Assessment is completed by the Canadian Sheep Federation using the National Farm Animal Care Council (NFACC) Animal Care Assessment Framework program (www.nfacc.ca).

The information provided on the Interim Sheep Welfare Risk Assessment will be used for the purpose of administering the GF2 Livestock Welfare Producer Grant Program. This information will be compiled anonymously and the aggregate data analyzed in collaboration with Alberta Lamb Producers (ALP) for the determination of future representation requirements and programming needs of Alberta's Sheep Industry.

As required through the GF2 program, this assessment is based on the Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Sheep (2013) and includes all requirements outlined in the Code. To qualify for funding through the GF2 program, producers must submit this completed assessment with their application. You may choose to complete the assessment on your own, or you may hire a private industry consultant (i.e. veterinarian, animal welfare/behavior specialist) to help you. The GF2 Livestock Welfare Producer Program will reimburse 50% up to a maximum assessment cost of \$1,000 (maximum reimbursement of \$500) for the private industry consultant. Complete details are given in the GF2 program 'Terms and Conditions', available at www.growingforward.alberta.ca or by calling the Alberta Ag Info Line at 310-FARM (3276).

Directions for Completing the Assessment:

Each of the assessment questions relates to a management practice. For each question you will be asked to indicate if on your farm you comply with the Code of Practice requirements:

- (Y) - yes, it occurs most of the time,
- (S) - sometimes, it occurs occasionally,
- (N) - no, rarely or never occurs
- (NA) - not applicable, only used for activities that are not part of your operation (i.e. dairy questions if you are a meat producer, dehorning if you have all polled sheep).

For the background information needed to answer these questions, refer to the section(s) of the Code of Practice that are listed with each question. The Code can be downloaded from the NFACC website (www.nfacc.ca/codes-of-practice/sheep) or, for those without internet access, by contacting the Alberta Lamb Producers office (403-948-1522, admin@alamb.ca).

At the end of each section there is an area to document practices within your operation where improvements can be made and where current management practices need to be modified to meet Code requirements.

Producer Information			
Applicant Name (Farm legal or corporate name)			
Primary Contact Person			
Address			
City, Province		Postal Code	
Phone	Fax	email	
Premise Identification Number			

Stockmanship Relating to Animal Health and Welfare	Y	S	N	NA	Section of Code
1. Do you ensure that all people that handle and care for sheep on your operation:					
• Have access to the Code of Practice?					4.2
• Know the requirements within the Code and provide the basics of care stated in the Code?					4.2
• Have a basic knowledge of sheep behaviour, proper handling techniques and common signs of illness, lameness and injury*					Section 4
• Receive training or work under the supervision of an experienced stockperson if required to perform the tasks referenced in each of these sections of the Code? *					5.1, 5.2, 5.4, 5.5, 5.6, 5.7, 5.9, 5.11, 5.12, 6.1.2, 7.1, 7.2
• Understand the reporting requirement for reportable diseases and immediately consult the flock veterinarian if suspected cases occur?					4.2
Areas for Improvement:					

*Training or supervision by a competent stockperson is required to: Recognize sign of illness, handling/moving sheep, applying identification, shearing, hoof trimming, castration, tail docking, minor horn trimming, assisting lambing ewes, assisting with vaginal or uterine prolapses, milking dairy ewes, loading/unloading sheep for transport, making euthanasia decision and euthanizing animals.

Available under Livestock Welfare Producer
 at www.growingforward.alberta.ca

J. Woods Livestock Services

Improving Animal Care Through Awareness and Education

For more information on animal care



www.livestockhandling.net