

MAFBNZ monitors New Zealand's sheep and goat flocks for the brain disease scrapie through a surveillance programme. This programme is a critical part of providing assurances to our international trading partners that New Zealand is free from scrapie and exports safe and wholesome animal products.

In order to maintain this surveillance, MAFBNZ needs animal heads for analysis.

ABOUT SCRAPIE

Scrapie is a fatal brain disease of sheep and goats. It is one of the family of diseases known as transmissible spongiform encephalopathies (TSE's). Other TSE's include bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) and chronic wasting disease of deer (CWD).

Scrapie has been recognised in Europe since the mid-18th century and occurs worldwide. Only a few sheep producing countries (Australia and New Zealand among them) are recognised to be free from the disease.

Although our livestock are not infected with scrapie, any country that wants to trade as scrapie-free must undertake an internationally acceptable on-going surveillance and monitoring programme, that has been designed along the guidelines provided by the World Organisation for Animal Health (the OIE).



OUR SURVEILLANCE PROGRAMME

Historically (until 2010) the MAF Biosecurity New Zealand surveillance programme relied on vets collecting the brains of sheep or goats older than two years that had shown signs of nervous disease. Vets would then submit these brains for further testing. This will continue and MAFBNZ still needs to hear from farmers whose stock exhibit progressive nervous illness. Talk to your vet.

More samples required

The numbers of samples from sheep and goats displaying nervous illness are not enough to supply the surveillance programme and MAF is now seeking samples from dead sheep and goats.

If you find recently dead sheep or goats on your property that are over two years of age, MAFBNZ will make a payment of \$50 for the animal's head. There will be a limit of two samples per year per farm.

HOW TO SUBMIT ANIMAL HEADS FOR TESTING

- Phone your vet first to let them know you have a head for sampling and to arrange how the vet would like you to supply the sample – for example double-bagged.
- The vet will tell you if the animal is eligible. Animals must be dead less than twelve hours to qualify. You can freeze the head until you are able to present it to your veterinarian.
- Supply the whole head of the dead animal to your local veterinary clinic.
- When removing the head, it is important that the back of the animal's throat is intact. This is the area where samples will be collected from.

Your vet will handle all further arrangements and documentation with MAFBNZ. You will ultimately be sent a proforma GST invoice by MAFBNZ and will need to check, correct if necessary, sign and return the invoice to receive payment.

SCRAPIE SURVEILLANCE PROGRAMME

Please support MAF Biosecurity New Zealand's programme of surveillance for the sheep and goat disease scrapie.

This surveillance helps your export industries by providing evidence of the country's freedom from scrapie for our international markets.

If you find any recently deceased sheep or goats on your property, MAF will pay \$50 for their head to undertake scientific sampling.

Full instructions on how to participate in this programme are inside.



Further information can be found at www.biosecurity.govt.nz/TSE

If your animals display unusual disease symptoms, abnormal behaviour or unexpected deaths, report it immediately to the MAF Biosecurity New Zealand Exotic Pest and Disease Hotline: **0800 80 99 66**.

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NEW ZEALAND'S SCRAPIE SURVEILLANCE PROGRAMME – YOU CAN HELP

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