

AI Circular: 2002/106
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LABORATORY SUPPORT FOR DIAGNOSIS OF FOOTROT
PROCEDURE

The attached document is a **WRITTEN INSTRUMENT** issued with the concurrence of the Director-General of NSW Agriculture under Clause 8.3 of Memorandum of understanding between the Director-General of NSW Agriculture and State Council of Rural Lands Protection Boards.

APPROVED

**For R F SHELDRAKE
DIRECTOR-GENERAL
NSW AGRICULTURE**

Date: 03 October 2002

APPROVED

**S ORR
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
STATE COUNCIL
RURAL LANDS PROTECTION BOARDS**

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LABORATORY SUPPORT FOR DIAGNOSIS OF FOOTROT

The Guidelines for Laboratory Testing for Footrot have been reviewed. NSW Agriculture will continue to fund the cost of laboratory testing to support a diagnosis of footrot, provided the following procedures have been undertaken in connection with the submission of samples:

- The accompanying Footrot Specimen Advice (distributed by the laboratory with footrot transport media) must show a full history of the flock, and contain the foot scores of 100 sheep selected at random. If 100 sheep are not available, the foot scores of all sheep in the mob presented are to be recorded;
- instructions for collection of samples (as distributed by the laboratory) must be followed;
- all submissions must show the RLPB/Property ID for the property of origin. This RLPB/Property ID must be recorded in Labsys/LIMS and displayed on all reports;
- testing in addition to the Gelatin Gel (Protease Thermostability) Test must be discussed in advance with the Program Leader (Flock Health) and a submission put forward to justify additional testing (eg Elastase Test). **Payment for testing outside of these guidelines must receive prior approval from Program Leader (Flock Health) before specimens are submitted to the laboratory.**
- once a diagnosis of footrot is made in a flock, additional testing on that flock will be at the client's expense;
- certification testing for shows/sales will be at the client's expense;
- payment for examination of smears will not be covered. Smears are not considered to contribute significantly to the diagnosis of footrot.

APPROVED

**IAN DENNEY
ACTING CHIEF
DIVISION OF ANIMAL INDUSTRIES**

Attachments:
Footrot Specimen Advice
Footrot Score Sheet
Environmental Score Sheet
Laboratory Submission Guidelines

Footrot Specimen Advice

Lab use only
Number
Date
Officer

Diagnostic and Analytical Services

OWNER Address

RLPB RLPB Property ID _ _ / _ _ _ _ _ _

SUBMITTER Address

Ph/Fax Date Collected Date Sent

SUSPECTED (Tick one box if diagnosis is certain. If uncertain, then number in order of suspicion)

✓ Virulent Footrot Benign Footrot Not Footrot Uncertain

SPECIMENS SUBMITTED	EXAMINATION REQUESTED	LABORATORY USE

REASON FOR TEST ✓ Regulatory Private benefit (owner pays)

SPECIES Breed Age Sex

HISTORY

Area Status: Protected / Control Mob Name Number in Mob

Number Examined Random Examination yes / no % Lamé

Footscores: (No. of sheep) Score 0 Score 1 Score 2 Score 3 Score 4 Score 5

Lesion activity (percentage of new, active lesions \geq score 2) None, <5%, 5-20%, >20%

Foot Bathing (yes / no) (Last date; chemical; frequency; duration)

Other treatments (yes / no) (Antibiotic; vaccination; last date)

Environmental factors: Circle appropriate No. : 1 - Limiting; 2 - Marginal; 3 - Favourable.

(See guide on Environment Scoring Sheet)

Moisture 1 2 3 Pasture 1 2 3

Temperature 1 2 3 If limiting (Score 1), because: Hot / Cold

Environmental Score (sum of environmental factor scores) ..

Do environmental conditions match footscores observed - Yes / No

If No – are lesions more/less severe than expected under existing environmental conditions:

Clinical Notes: (onset, duration, changes in environmental score, rate of spread)

.....
.....
.....

Signature **Date**

Test results and findings may be provided to authorised staff and used for statistical, surveillance, extension, certification and regulatory purposes in accordance with Departmental policies. The information assists disease and residue control programs and underpins market

access for agricultural products. The source of the information will remain confidential unless otherwise required by law or regulatory policies.

FOOTSCORING DETAILS

Mob: Owner Date

SHEEP	FOOT 1	FOOT 2	FOOT 3	FOOT 4	HIGHEST SCORE	FOOT SAMPLE	SHEEP	FOOT 1	FOOT 2	FOOT 3	FOO T	HIGHEST SCORE
1							51					
2							52					
3							53					
4							54					
5							55					
6							56					
7							57					
8							58					
9							59					
10							60					
11							61					
12							62					
13							63					
14							64					
15							65					
16							66					
17							67					
18							68					
19							69					
20							70					
21							71					
22							72					
23							73					
24							74					
25							75					
26							76					
27							77					
28							78					
29							79					
30							80					
31							81					
32							82					
33							83					
34							84					
35							85					
36							86					
37							87					
38							88					
39							89					
40							90					
41							91					
42							92					
43							93					
44							94					
45							95					
46							96					
47							97					
48							98					

49							99					
50							100					

GUIDE TO THE ISOLATION OF *D. NODOSUS* FROM FOOTROT LESIONS

REGIONAL VETERINARY LABORATORY, ORANGE

The culture kit you have just opened contains:

1. Instructions
2. Diagnostic and Analytical Services Footrot Specimen Advice form
3. 6 swab sticks
4. 5 transport media

NB. Store unused media at 4°C . Transport media will remain satisfactory providing the indicator in the medium has not turned blue and bottle is full. As a guide, it should be used before the **expiry date** on the bottle. Care is required with transport of unused transport media in vehicles during hot weather- it is preferable to keep the media chilled.

FOOTROT TRANSPORT MEDIUM **INSTRUCTIONS FOR USE**

1. **Check each bottle** of transport media - the medium should be opaque and colourless. If the indicator in the medium has turned blue or if the bottle is not full, do not use that bottle. NB "Full" is a level approximately half way up the neck of the bottle.
2. Using the sterile swab provided, collect material from an **active lesion**. **It is preferable to use the cotton tipped end.**
3. Remove lid from bottle of transport medium. Push swab **deep** into medium and break swab off level with lip of the bottle. Replace lid **firmly** (aiming to create an airtight seal- no need to tighten as hard as possible). Only use one swab per bottle of transport medium.
4. **Label bottles with identifying sheep number** (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, etc. see Footscoring Details Table. Sampled feet details must be recorded and correspond to the number on the bottle. Start scoring at sheep number 6, leaving numbers 1-5 vacant till you examine a sheep you wish to obtain a swab from). Best to label **lid** eg with texta, preferably permanent marker **and adhesive label** eg with pen or texta (if the latter becomes wet, the label may fall off or the texta become illegible).
5. Transport medium should be returned to RVL Orange **as soon as possible and kept cool during transit.**

Enquires should be directed to:-
Duty Officer 02 6391 3858

ENVIRONMENTAL SCORING SYSTEM

FOOTROT SPECIMEN ADVICE

Submitters are reminded discounted Laboratory Charges for *D. nodosus* isolation and Gelatin Gel testing **depends on providing a full history**. Such submissions provide valuable surveillance information to support the Footrot Strategic Plan. Where incomplete information is provided, surveillance value is reduced and charges will apply at the discretion of the Program Leader Flock Health.

NB. If all sheep are not to be sampled, commence foot scoring at Sheep 6, leaving 1-5 vacant to enter details of sheep subsequently sampled.

ENVIRONMENTAL SCORING SYSTEM

Environmental Factors

The rating system is based on the assumption that 3 environmental factors are necessary for footrot to spread:

Moisture	<p>At least 6 weeks of rainfall averaging 50 mm per month, with at least 50 mm in the proceeding 4 weeks. (The presence of sufficient moisture in the pasture to wet your boots mid-morning is quite a good indication that conditions are favourable, assuming temperature requirements are satisfied). Score as</p> <p>If these conditions are not met- score as</p> <p>If moisture is borderline - score as</p>	<p>3- Favourable</p> <p>1- Unfavourable</p> <p>2- Marginal</p>
Temperature	<p>Mean daily temperature between 10°C and 20°C - Score as</p> <p>If outside this range- score as then indicate whether because</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">< 10 °C - Circle</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">> 20 °C - Circle</p> <p>If temperature is borderline- score as</p>	<p>3- Favourable</p> <p>1- Unfavourable cold hot</p> <p>2 - Marginal</p>
Pasture	<p>Pasture is actively growing and contains a high percentage (≥ 30%) of clover or similar low growing bulky moisture retaining herbage (eg capeweed). Score as</p> <p>If these conditions are not met - Score as</p> <p>If pasture is borderline - Score as</p>	<p>3 Favourable</p> <p>1 Unfavourable</p> <p>2 Marginal</p>

Lesion Activity

The prevalence of new, active lesions score ≥ 2, provides an indicator of the level of footrot activity. Submitters should make an assessment if footscores observed reflect full expression of the disease based on prevailing environmental conditions. Assessment should be made whether lesions are more or less severe than expected under existing environmental conditions.