

Livestock contractors footrot certification scheme

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Animal Biosecurity and Welfare, NSW DPI

The NSW Footrot Strategic Plan

The NSW Footrot Strategic Plan was developed jointly by the NSW sheep industry and government and was implemented in 1988. At that time virulent footrot was widespread in NSW, causing significant animal welfare issues and major production losses to the industry. It was not easy for NSW producers to find a source of low risk restocker sheep.

Eradication of footrot from a flock is a major undertaking, requiring technical input from veterinarians and industry experts, and extensive ongoing financial and labour commitments from the stock owner. In August 2009 the prevalence of virulent footrot in NSW had been reduced to less than 1% of flocks across the state enabling the state to be declared a protected area for virulent footrot.

The success of the Footrot Strategic Plan is a credit to all in the industry for their support over the twenty years it took to achieve the goal of making NSW a Protected Area for virulent footrot. This status has been maintained due to the ongoing support for the NSW Footrot Strategic Plan by the NSW sheep industry and vigilance of individual sheep producers.

Footrot in NSW

Virulent footrot is a notifiable disease in NSW. All infected flocks have movement restrictions applied and are required to complete an approved disease eradication program within a specified time frame.

All sheep entering NSW must be accompanied by a signed, completed National Sheep Health Statement as set out in the NSW Biosecurity Order (Permitted Activities).

Diagnosis of footrot

The diagnosis of footrot in a flock is an act of veterinary science governed by the *NSW Veterinary Practice Act 2003* and must be made by a veterinarian. Local Land Services (LLS) veterinarians assist owners of infected flocks to develop a compulsory disease eradication program that will work for their property and flock. The details will vary depending on the enterprise types on the property.

Approved disease eradication programs

Unless destocking is chosen, eradication programs usually require multiple inspections of all sheep on the property. Accurate assessment of the disease state of every hoof of every sheep is a key factor in eradicating the disease quickly and minimising costs to the stock owner. This is where the assistance of an accredited footrot contractor can make the difference between a successful program and a failure.

Accredited contractors are experienced in detecting footrot, especially in sheep that may be potential carriers of infection, and they have specialised handling equipment to make the job easier. They may also be more able to make an objective decision about which sheep to cull from a mob than the owner. Holding on to sheep which have not responded well to footrot treatments is a guarantee of failure for the program.

For detailed information on footrot, including foot scoring charts see the [Footrot in sheep and goats Primefact](#).

Accredited footrot contractors

The Livestock Contractors Footrot Certification Scheme was established as part of the NSW Footrot Strategic Plan to facilitate the involvement of experienced contractors in footrot programs. The Scheme has been endorsed by the NSW Footrot Steering Committee, the Livestock Contractors Association and the Veterinary Practitioners Board of NSW.

After the initial diagnosis of footrot is made in a flock and an approved disease eradication plan is developed with an LLS veterinarian, the program can be managed by an accredited contractor who makes regular reports to the LLS veterinarian.

To become accredited, contractors must meet strict criteria which are outlined in the [Livestock Contractors Footrot Certification Scheme Procedure](#).

Accreditation is for a period of five years, after which contractors may apply for re-accreditation. The following contractors are approved to undertake footrot work in NSW:

Accredited footrot contractors in NSW.

Name	Region	Contact	Email	Expiry
Mr Rob Parkinson	Young NSW	0428 251 039	robert.parkinson7@bigpond.com.au	31/10/2023
Mr Richard McGowan	Illabo NSW	0437 324 513		30/06/2023
Mr Jason Byron	Kingsvale NSW	0428 830 119	whitedogrural@gmail.com	31/08/2024

More information

For more information contact:

- your [Local Land Services](#) veterinarian, or
- Biosecurity general inquiries phone 1800 680 244 or email animal.biosecurity@dpi.nsw.gov.au

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