



## Funding for NABS network activities to be continued

A great message from Cass Wittwer (Dept Ag):

We have received wonderful news that the federal Minister for Agriculture (The Hon. David Littleproud) has now approved funds to continue the NABS Network program until June 2023.

Thank you for all your SDI contributions and attendance at Masterclasses, *which has demonstrated the Network's worthiness*. This money will also cover the herd surveillance data to be provided by practices (discussed at the Broome Masterclass, with details and logistics in progress).

There will be some minor changes to the NABS administration process which are yet to be finalised, but in the meantime please keep up the great work of submitting SDIs as normal, and when changes are finalised we will pass on details for submissions.

This newsletter there are a couple of good reports of owners and vets alert to unusual, possibly exotic, presentations – read below on following up on feral pigs and lame sheep.

Got some practical ideas for getting things done quickly and easily? Please do send in any tips to share with us all.

Cheers Kev

Newsletter #20 (27 May 2020)

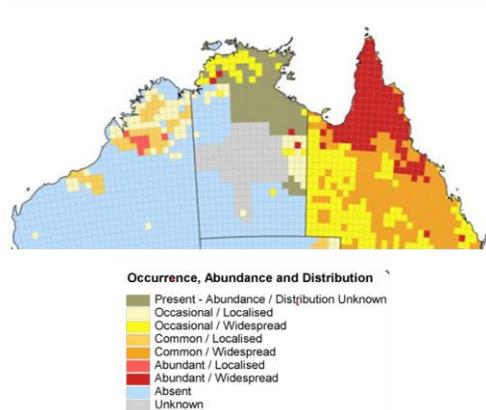
### NABS SDIs (private and govt)





### Feral pigs [pestsmart.org.au](http://pestsmart.org.au)

Feral pig distribution 2006-07 (Peter West, DPI NSW, Invasive Animals CRC)



## Aware - FNQ feral pig rule-outs

In January 2020 a farmer in North Qld saw an increased number of feral pigs on the property. He noted that some appeared in poor condition and ‘sick looking’ and called his private practitioner. Eight animals were trapped and presented for examination and sampling.

Of the 8 animals that were trapped, 4 were piglets and the other 4 were immature, approx. 30-40 kg. No clinical signs of illness were noted antemortem.

Post mortem examination was performed on the 4 older pigs. No gross lesions were seen. Samples submitted were bloods, urine and fixed and fresh heart, kidney, lung, liver, small intestine, large intestine and stomach.

**Laboratory Findings: Exotic diseases (ASF, CSF and FMD) and endemic diseases (leptospirosis and brucellosis) were all ruled out.**

No diagnosis was reached but the exclusion of ASF, CSF and FMD was very important. Recommendations to the property owner - continue monitoring for signs of illness amongst feral pigs.



## **Alert - acutely lame sheep in western Qld**

In March 2020 about 10% of a mob of 250 sheep on dry Mitchell Grass west of Longreach were observed acutely lame, with one mortality.

An outbreak of lameness in any livestock in the region is of concern. The vet immediately recommended drafting off all sheep that were lame or showing any form of clinical signs and keeping them isolated until his visit which would be made as soon as possible.

The sheep (240 young Dorper ewes and 10 rams) had only been on farm for 10 days after being trucked from the Atherton Tablelands. The sheep had unloaded with no clinical signs, but the manager noticed increasing lameness over the next 7 days and found one animal dead in the paddock. No other signs or conditions were evident.

At the property visit the following day the manager had drafted off 24 affected animals for full examination. One lame ewe had significant interdigital lesions and under-running of hoof wall, increased respiratory efforts, nasal discharge and pyrexia.

All lame sheep had a full physical examination. No others showed any clinical signs or pathology other than hoof/foot lesions ranging from no visible abnormalities to mild inter-digital dermatitis to significant under-running of hoof/coronary band medially. Swabs were collected and all animals treated with Alamycin LA.

Bloods were collected from the sick ewe and one other with the worst foot lesions.

On advice from DPI lab in QLD, Bluetongue investigation was also undertaken because positive pathological cases had been noted on the Tablelands within the previous 6 months.

Immediate recommendations to the manager were to keep the sheep isolated and monitor remaining animals every 2 days to isolate/treat any further affected animals.

Over the next 7 days the manager only treated another 2 animals and re-treated 5 of the initial cohort. Lesions healed rapidly after antibiotic treatment.

Cultures from the foot swabs grew *Fusobacterium necrophorum* and GIT microbiota. *Dichelobacter nodosus* was not isolated.

Bluetongue virus testing (real-time PCR) was negative but one sheep was antibody (ELISA) positive. The lab reported that it is not unusual to see that serotype in sheep from that region.

Summary to the manager:

- The pathogens isolated in the lab cultures are common in the wet tropics and disease progression in dry Longreach environment should not occur.
- Stress and physical inflammation to feet associated with trucking would have exacerbated disease.
- If receiving further sheep from the Tablelands, consider installing a footbath upon arrival or close monitoring and immediate antibiotic treatment for affected animals to avoid need for blanket antibiotic use.



### National Arbovirus Monitoring Program map of Bluetongue - 25 May 2020

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## Got a tip to share?

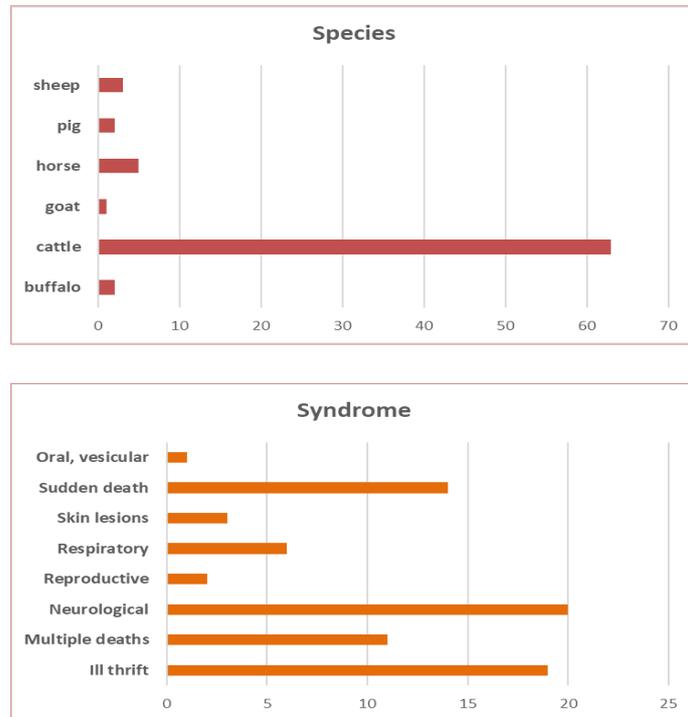
In previous newsletters we've had quite a few field 'tips and traps' around aspects of doing disease investigations, some eggs:

- Euthanasia with MgSO<sub>4</sub> <http://nabsnet.com.au/euthanasia-mgso4/>
- Getting a brain out intact <http://nabsnet.com.au/intact-brain/>
- Sharpening knives <http://nabsnet.com.au/knife-sharpen/>
- Use of Jab sticks <http://nabsnet.com.au/jab-sticks/>
- Collecting maggots <http://nabsnet.com.au/swf-surveillance/>

Here's an opportunity to share your good ideas and practical ways of doing things.

Send in your tips from practice – some words and an image or two if relevant, to [pauline@harrisparkgroup.com.au](mailto:pauline@harrisparkgroup.com.au).

## SDIs seen by the NABS network so far



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### Syndrome = oral lesions and vesicular diseases

In the last two years there have been no NABS SDI cases presenting with a syndrome of oral lesions or vesicles, and one with teat lesions.

As a refresh, here are the disease investigation guides if you see this syndrome.



**Suspicion of an EAD – Hotline 1800 675 888**

### Remember to ask....

- How long have the animals been affected?
- What proportion of animals are affected?
- Are other species affected, what are they?
- Have any animals been introduced to / removed from the property?
- Has any new equipment or feed been brought in?
- Have there been visitors to the property recently?
- Has anyone in contact with the animals been overseas recently?

### Sample collection guide

- **Blood:** clotted, EDTA and smear (from acute and convalescent animals)
- **Priority tissues:**
  - vesicular fluid from unruptured vesicles – syringe or swab into plain sterile tube
  - epithelium from unruptured vesicles, 1-2 cm tags from freshly ruptured vesicles
  - oral / nasal / vesicular / tonsillar swabs into VTM or saline
- **PM samples:** lymph nodes, spleen, liver, heart, lung, GIT, any lesions

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### Happy to help

Let me know anything you'd like covered here or on the website

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or visit [www.nabsnet.com.au](http://www.nabsnet.com.au)

Newsletter sent on Kevin's behalf from the team at Harris Park Group