

From: [Andrew Farran](#)
To: [Kerry Hansford](#)
Cc: [Kerry Hansford](#); [Info](#); [A Farran](#)
Subject: Re AWEX National Wool Declaration Review
Date: Friday, 27 January 2023 9:25:55 AM

Regarding the current National Wool Declaration Review: I wish to comment on the following aspects of the Review:

- The relevance of the current mulesing status declarations, viz. Non Mulesed (NM), Ceased Mulesing (CM), mulesed with Analgesic &/or Anaesthetic products (AA), treated with Liquid Nitrogen (LN) and Mulesed (M). For consistency across the Australian wool industry, the definition of mulesing is sourced from the Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines, AWEX said.

There is a definitional issue here. Mulesing has been defined as the surgical cutting and removal of flesh in and around the breech causing unavoidable bleeding. The LN status or category incorporates or includes treatments against fly-strike which on any definition do not involve mulesing, namely Liquid Nitrogen (LN). This treatment should be listed as a separate category and not lumped in with mulesing which only creates confusion and is a distortion. What is more, negative attitudes to and feelings about mulesing are running high in world retail markets and among animal welfare groups and world communities generally. The more that anti-fly-strike treatments can be separated from mulesing the better for wool industry interests overall. So why compound their problem by associating non-mulesing treatments in a return or declaration on mulesing? Liquid Nitrogen in particular should stand as a separate treatment category on its own to ensure that it is not confused with mulesing. There must come a time when LN treatments become more numerous than is the case to date once the confusion (deliberate or otherwise) surrounding its status is avoided

The same might be said for other breech modifications or animal welfare declarations within the NWD.

A fundamental problem with the NWD is that every category or entry is related to Mulesing - either being mulesed or non-mulesed where the latter may beg the question as to what is mulesed, causing the confusion adverted to.

With regard to tail-docking it too should be disassociated from mulesing. Every sheep in the land, more for less, is tail-docked. We don't speak of that as mulesing though it may be contemporaneous with it. The concern over tail-docking is that it should be conducted as painlessly as possible, including with the best available pain reliefs.

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The positive benefits of the above are being misunderstood or misrepresented in

certain wool growing quarters, including supposedly representative organisations, which seem determined to ride out the adverse perceptions over mulesing or who are deluded in thinking that the susceptibility of sheep to fly-strike can be eliminated through breeding. Either way irrational self-interest or ulterior motives seem to be involved. That is not just short-sighted, it could lead to the demise of the wool industry altogether. Governments in overseas markets and their constituents are intensifying measures to enhance the wellbeing of livestock and proscribe what they see as cruelty where they find it. An accelerating avalanche of such legislation and related border protections may be poised to descend on the affected trades. We are being warned (again).

Submitted by Andrew Farran,
Director, Yiddinga Holdings Pty Ltd,
Formerly of Edenhope, West Wimmera, Victoria

Now at Unit 205, 1259 Malvern Road, Malvern 3144, Victoria
Ph 0429 146 580

[Email: afarran@bigpond.net.au](mailto:afarran@bigpond.net.au)