

Animal Welfare - Guidelines

Ver: 18.5

The purpose of this document is to provide operating guidelines for application of the [Five Freedoms](#).

The 'Five Freedoms' is a widely used method of describing, in simple terms, the key attributes of good animal welfare standards. These guidelines apply to all animals on the farm. This includes pets, working dogs and horses. *See full Standards document for details.*

Freedom from	What this 'freedom' requires
Hunger and thirst	<p>Access to fresh water</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sufficient to satisfy natural requirements under the current weather conditions. 2. Clean water of good quality free of contaminates 3. Frequency of water points such that does not place stress on stock to access. <p>Access to adequate feed at all times</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. For adult sheep to maintain bodyweight 2. For young sheep to grow and increase body weight 3. For pregnant sheep or sheep with lambs to be able to maintain bodyweight while lactating <p>A drought strategy should be in place and a plan for its implementation. This will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • monitoring the condition and nutritional value of available pasture • an action plan with trigger points to ensure sheep do not drop below fat score 2
Discomfort	<p>Provision of adequate shelter and space: In Australia this refers to sufficient natural vegetation or plantations to provide shade and protection from wind. Particular attention should be paid to sheep shorn in cold or wet weather to ensure they have adequate shelter from wind and rain.</p>
Pain, injury disease	<p>Overview: It is important that attention is paid to providing rapid diagnosis of disease or injury and prompt and appropriate treatment provided. Animals must not be left to suffer unattended.</p> <p>Physical injury: Animals with a physical injury or disability must be dealt with within 24 hours of being identified. If the injury or condition cannot be treated effectively to relieve pain and suffering and put the animal back on a path to full health and normal capabilities it should be euthanized promptly.</p> <p>Stunning (using a rifle or captive bolt) prior to cutting the throat is required. If stunning equipment is not available, cutting the throat is permitted to avoid the animal suffering undue pain and distress. (Captive bolt equipment is now freely available in Australia).</p> <p>Worms: Monitoring for worm burden (egg counts) and appropriate drenching.</p> <p>Mulesing is not permitted</p> <p>Lamb marking or other surgical interventions must be carried out at no greater than eight weeks of age.</p>

<p>Pain, injury disease <i>continued</i></p>	<p>Tail docking must be done using a hot knife or rings The tail must be docked at a point where it will cover the anus in males and the vulva in females (one palpable joint left free).</p> <p>Castration must be done using rubber rings or surgically using pain relief.</p> <p>Ear notching is allowed providing it does not exceed 10% of the surface of the ear. Other approved identification methods include; RFID tags, metal clips, plastic tags.</p> <p>Dehorning is not allowed. Horn tipping is permitted.</p> <p>Shearing injuries must be attended to immediately by someone who is competent in this area. Pain relief should be available.</p>
<p>Fear and distress</p>	<p>Low stress handling: Minimal use of dogs for mustering and yard work Dogs should be muzzled when working in yards if they show any propensity to bite.</p> <p>Shearing: Shearers must be instructed not to abuse or mishandle sheep in such a manner as to cause pain or injury. (<i>refer to Shearing Code of Practice</i>)</p> <p>On farm slaughter: It is illegal to slaughter livestock on farm for commercial purposes. If on farm slaughter takes place it must be for personal use or staff rations only. Slaughtering should be conducted by trained and competent person and should not be conducted in sight of other sheep.</p> <p>Method: The animal must be rendered unconscious by stunning followed by bleeding out after the animal is unconscious. The spinal cord should not be broken or severed until after confirmation of death. For further details http://www.animalwelfarestandards.net.au/sheep/</p> <p>Confinement: If sheep are quarantined for treatment or observation they should be in the company of others or confined within sight of other sheep.</p> <p>Predators: The risk of predators should be assessed and predator control programs should be in place using the most humane method for the species. Reference http://kb.rspca.org.au/What-is-humane-vertebrate-pest-control_151.html</p>
<p>Freedom to express normal behaviour</p>	<p>Feedlots for merino sheep are not permitted. Sheep should always be provided with sufficient space and company with animals of their own kind to enable them to express normal behaviour. At shearing:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sheep should be shedded the night before to empty out. 2. Attention should be paid to space so that sheep can get back on their feet without being trampled by other sheep in the event of them going down. 3. Sheep should have access to water before the end of the next day.