

September 2020

The goal of the American Sheep Industry Association and the American sheep industry is to eradicate scrapie from our borders. In addition, it is ASI's objective to have the United States recognized as scrapie free in accordance with the World Organization for Animal Health. This publication is created specifically for those of you in the field who are also working to achieve this goal.

This newsletter brings together, into one spot, current information from all 50 states, as well as from the U.S. Department of Agriculture and any other organization providing scrapie news, and reports it back to the field. If you have first-hand accounts that you believe would be relevant for others to read or have information that you would like included in this newsletter, please email kyle@sheepusa.org.

NSEP Progress: The 2019 Scrapie Rule at 1 Year

It has been just more than a year since implementation of the expanded scrapie rule began. Published in April 2019, the rule represents the final phase in the effort by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service to eradicate scrapie. The regulations expanded application of the National Scrapie Eradication Program to populations of sheep and goats not previously included.

For sheep producers, one big change was the discontinuation of APHIS provided, no-cost flock ID tags. APHIS now only offers no-cost tags to sheep and goat producers who are new to the scrapie program. Producers who have not received free tags from APHIS in the past are able to obtain up to 100 plastic flock ID tags, free-of-charge. ASI believes the tag provisions are key to compliance and continues to press APHIS to provide tags to producers at a reduced or no-cost level.

The new rule also made the identification and recordkeeping requirements for goat owners consistent with the requirements that sheep owners have had to follow for many years. Like sheep producers, producers of goats for meat or fiber and slaughter goats more than 18 months of age are now required to officially identify their animals to their flocks/herds of birth or flocks/herds of origin and to maintain certain identification records for five years.

Any sheep or goat that is moved into interstate commerce, or sold, or that is more than 18 months of age and commingled with other animals from different flocks of origin, must be identified to its flock/herd of origin and to its flock/herd of birth by the owner of

the animal or his or her agent. This includes animals unloading at a livestock facility that is approved to accept unidentified sheep or goats and that has agreed to act as an agent for the owner to apply official identification.

Many producers appreciate that some markets are willing to act as an agent for the owner and apply official identification before the animals are commingled with animals from other flocks, despite the extra cost that markets might charge for the service.

Some markets, however, have discontinued offering these services due to increased numbers of unidentified animals arriving at their facilities. In those cases, the animals must have a scrapie tag applied prior to arrival at the facility or the animals will be turned away.

Markets collect the scrapie tag numbers for their records as required. If animals are identified prior to arrival, the scrapie tag numbers are often supplied to market officials upon arrival. Not unexpectedly, the presentation of these numbers can vary widely, and producers are encouraged to present the information in an orderly manner, ensuring that the numbers are written clearly and concisely. This ensures record accuracy and helps avoid transcription errors.

One Wisconsin market recently gave notice to their customers that they "will no longer accept scrapie numbers scribbled on scraps of paper, napkins, newspapers, cardboard..."

The regulation allowed expansion of scrapie surveillance testing to more goats. Overall, implementation of the rule has been relatively smooth, especially in states where animal health officials have embraced the changes.

To view the National Scrapie Eradication Program current Monthly Report, prepared by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service's Veterinary Services, go to https://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_health/animal_diseases/scrapie/downloads/monthly_scrapie_report.pdf

Animals Sampled for Scrapie Testing Sheep and Goats

In Fiscal Year 2020, as of July 31, 2020

28,164 animals have been sampled for scrapie testing: 26,857 RSSS and 1,307 on-farm samples
22,055 sheep and 6,109 goats
No sheep or goats have tested positive for classical scrapie

Regulatory Scrapie Slaughter Surveillance (RSSS) Statistics

Since April 1, 2003

661,639 samples collected
488 NVSL* confirmed positives

*National Veterinary Services Laboratories

In FY 2020 (as of July 31, 2020)

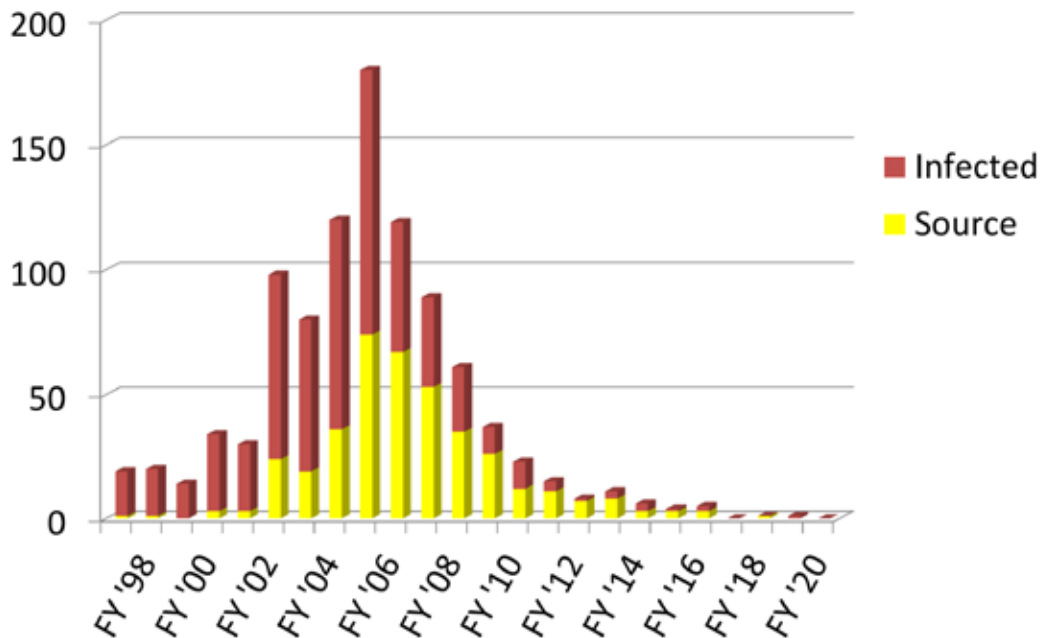
26,857 samples collected (5,516 from goats)
0 NVSL confirmed positive

On-Farm Surveillance

In Fiscal Year 2019, as of July 31, 2020

1,307 animals have been tested on farm – 714 sheep and 593 goats

Infected and Source Flocks New Statuses by Year – Fiscal Years 1997 to 2020*

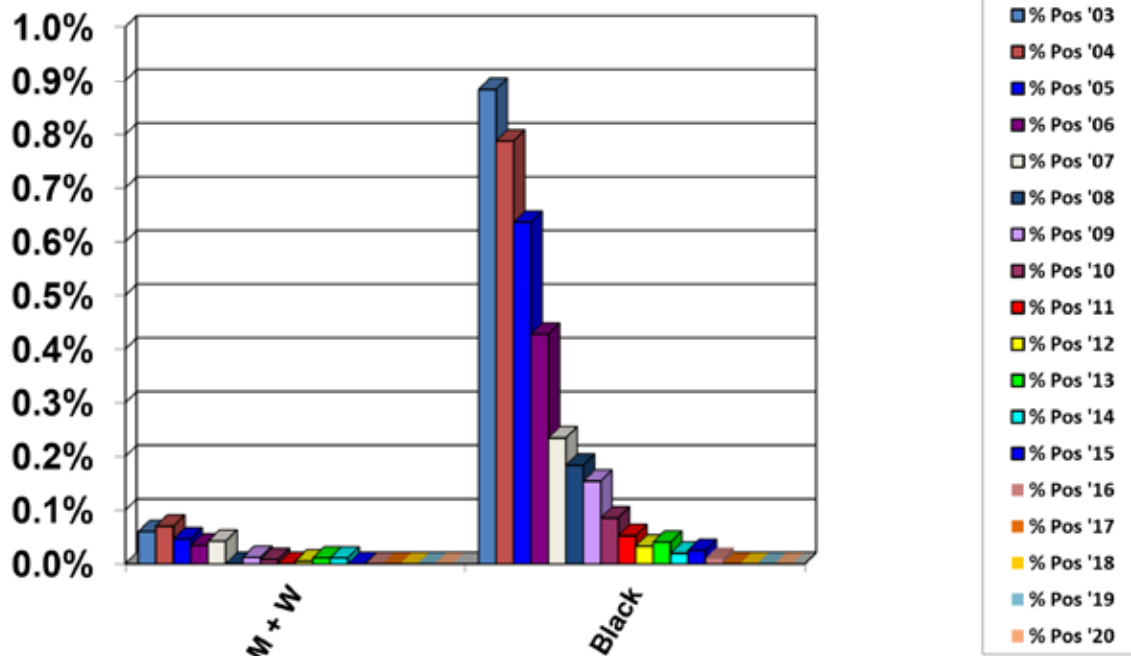


(Chart 3)

* As of July 31, 2020

Percent of RSSS Sheep Samples that Tested Positive for Classical Scrapie - By Face Color

FY 2003 – FY 2020*

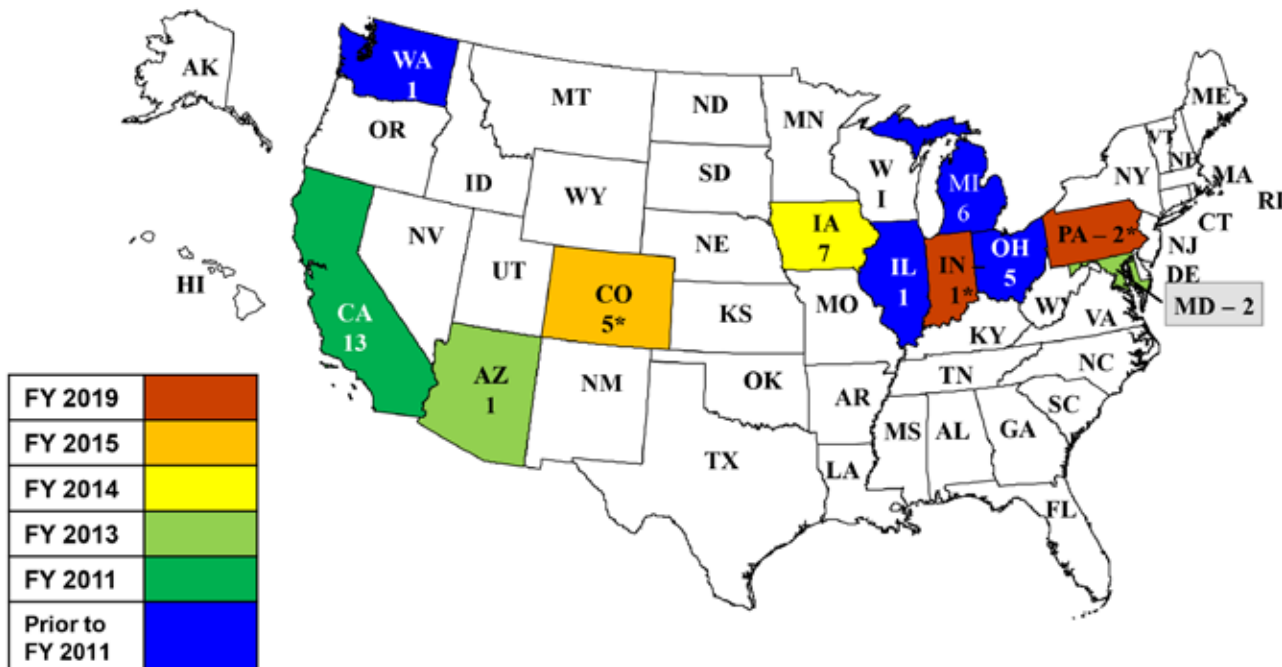


(Chart 1)

* As of July 31, 2020. Adjusted to exclude multiple positive animals from same flock. Mottled- and white-faced combined. Does not include Nor98-like scrapie cases found through RSSS.

Scrapie Cases in Goats

FY 2002 – FY 2020



(Figure 1)

Color code indicates fiscal year of last case by State. 44 NVSL confirmed cases.

* States with 1 RSSS positive goat; samples collected November 2014, July 2018, and June 2019

RSSS and On-Farm Surveillance Testing by Species

FY 2020*

Species	Type	Age Group			Grand Total
		< 2 Yrs	2 to < 6 Yrs	6+ Yrs	
Goats	Dairy	51	1,484	63	1,598
	Fiber		31	3	34
	Meat	190	2,268	309	2,767
	Multipurpose	76	1,233	140	1,449
	Unknown	1	257	3	261
	Total		318	5,273	518
Sheep	Black Face	485	5,541	1,195	7,221
	Mottled <1% Black	3	985	59	1,047
	Mottled >1% Black	115	2,402	103	2,620
	White Face	260	8,951	147	9,358
	Other Sheep	161	1,448	174	1,783
	Unknown Sheep	7	19		26
	Total		1,031	19,346	1,678
Grand Total		1,349	24,619	2,196	28,164

(Table 1)

* As of July 31, 2020. Darker shading represents greater number of animals tested that met targeting criteria.

Submitting Mature Heads

APHIS provides shipping boxes and labels for the submission of heads for scrapie testing at no cost to producers. Many veterinary diagnostic laboratories also accept heads for scrapie testing. To request a box or more information on sample submission, contact the veterinary services field office for your state. State contact information is available at https://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_health/contacts/field-operations-districts.pdf. VS field offices can also be reached through the toll-free number at 866-873-2824.

Free ID For Producers

The National Scrapie Eradication Program provides up to 100 plastic tags free of charge to producers who have not received the free tags in the past (call 866-USDA-TAG to get tags). Markets may still get free metal tags through. Contact your state or local VS office for more information.

Websites Dedicated to the Eradication of Scrapie

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service: <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal-health/scrapie>

Maryland Small Ruminant Page: <http://www.sheepandgoat.com/updatescrapie>

National Institute of Animal Agriculture: <http://www.eradicatescrapie.org/>

Scrapie SharePoint: <https://share.aphis.usda.gov/sites/vs-sgh/>

(Federal and State employees can access this password-protected site by emailing Diane.L.Sutton@aphis.usda.gov if you need assistance.)

