Program: Costs of a Maedi Visna Flock Certification Program and the Changes in Productivity and Economic Output

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In Partnership With
Ontario Sheep Producers

Program objectives:
➢ To quantify the costs associated with a Maedi Visna Flock Certification Program (MVFCP).
➢ To determine the conditions under which this program will provide net economic benefits for different sectors of the sheep industry.

Methodology:
➢ A computer model of the MVFCP program was designed.
➢ Phone interviews were conducted with farmers in order to collect data and this information was entered into the model.
➢ The model calculated the net costs of participation in the program.

Results:
The two benefits of the MVFCP program have been identified; a savings of 11 pounds of lamb per year per infected ewe; and for breeders, a more significant bonus of improved sales if displaying a certified status.
➢ Within these parameters, there seems to be a good economic return for breeders in Ontario. These farms need not be large.
➢ The costs for breeding farms reached $15 per MV test and remained optimal.
➢ Only a portion of lambs needed to be sold as breeding stock. Breeding sales were assumed as 25% of sales achieving a 10% improvement in price, which was quite modest.
➢ Breakeven occurred just before or shortly after becoming 'A' Status for all combinations of flock size, ewe, and breeding sale values and bleeding costs for breeding flocks.
➢ Commercial producers on the other hand had a conundrum. If they don’t have the disease, they will have no benefit to being on the program. The program showed little benefit for all scenarios of commercial flocks.

Support Appreciated from:

Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs

Community Benefits Include: Economic benefits for all sectors of sheep industry, savings at individual farms.