



The Ontario Animal Health Network is a program focusing on early disease detection so as to identify trends in animal health issues. Information was obtained from a quarterly survey of practicing veterinarians and laboratory data from the Animal Health Laboratory. It is the intent of this program to improve the health of small ruminants in Ontario.

#### UPDATES FROM THE PROVINCE

**Ontario Veterinary College:** Dr. Nicole Nemeth will be submitting a project to do additional Bluetongue surveillance research in Ontario.

**OMAFRA:** OMAFRA, together with OAHN, the Animal Health Laboratory, Ontario Goat, and the Ontario Sheep Marketing Agency, are investigating a captive bolt training course for small ruminant producers. The event is in the planning stages- stay tuned for more information.

**Comments from veterinary practitioners:** Fewer issues with hemonchosis (barber pole intestinal worm) were noted when compared with this time last year. Multiple industry and veterinary research initiatives have been working on the topic of hemonchosis.

**Animal Health Laboratory:** There was an increase in testing for caprine arthritis encephalitis, maedi visna, and contagious lymphadenitis this quarter. Johnes' disease testing was also discussed as some flocks/herds are trying to reduce the prevalence of Johnes' but the disease presents some unique challenges.

**OAHN update: Stakeholder meeting (October 1<sup>st</sup>):** The 3<sup>rd</sup> annual OAHN stakeholder meeting was held October 1<sup>st</sup> in Guelph. Small ruminant industry representatives, producers, OAHN veterinarians, veterinarians from government, academia, and the laboratories attended. The day was focused around providing feedback on OAHN, and what should be done in each network to increase effectiveness.

Some key positive aspects of the OAHN small ruminant network:

- Documenting the issues facing small ruminants in Ontario on a regular basis and communicating this to veterinarians and producers
- Using information from the network to feed into continuing education planning, producer education, and research
- Gathering a group for emergency issues quickly to take action (see bluetongue below)

**OAHN project:** Each OAHN Network has been allotted \$50,000 for a project to address a gap in surveillance in Ontario. The small ruminant OAHN group has discussed several ideas. Dr. Jocelyn Jansen and Dr. Paula Menzies are heading up the submission of the proposals (due December 1<sup>st</sup>). Questions or ideas can be forwarded [oahn@uoguelph.ca](mailto:oahn@uoguelph.ca)

#### EMERGING DISEASES

**Bluetongue surveillance from OAHN:** In early September 2015, Bluetongue was diagnosed in a cattle herd in Ontario. Small ruminant industry partners and OAHN veterinarians raised concerns about the possibility of the virus jumping to sheep and goats. An emergency meeting of the OAHN small ruminant network, OAHN bovine network, *Culicoides* (midge insects) researchers, and industry partners was organized; led by Drs. Jocelyn Jansen, Maria Spinato and Paula Menzies. The group discussed the risk to small ruminant populations and possible surveillance to evaluate the issue. As a result, OAHN allocated funds to trap and test for *Culicoides* in the region where the positive diagnosis was made. *Culicoides* are the insects responsible for transmitting Bluetongue virus between animals.

#### OAHN RESOURCES FOR PRODUCERS

**Website:** [www.oahn.ca](http://www.oahn.ca) Access previous producer reports, free printable infographics and info sheets.

**Facebook and Twitter feeds:** Our feeds share disease alerts immediately upon release, and aggregate news from around the province such as producer resources for disease prevention and education. In an outbreak or emerging disease situation, these forms of communication are fast and effective- make sure you follow/like us to stay in the know.

Twitter: @OntAnHealthNet

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/OntarioAnimalHealthNetwork/?fref=ts>