

Ovine Pulmonary Adenocarcinoma

Considered to be a major threat to the UK sheep industry



- Lung cancer in sheep caused by a virus Jaagsiekte sheep retrovirus, which is always fatal
- Virus is spread between sheep by respiratory routes and also via colostrum and milk

- No commercial diagnostic available for live sheep
- Diagnosis by post mortem lung examination
- Ultrasound scanning can screen for OPA lung tumours bigger than 2cm diameter
- Negative scan cannot guarantee sheep is OPA free
- No vaccine available

Tips for control

If you don't have it already:

- Run a closed flock or buy from trusted sources
- Don't buy it in and consider ultrasound screening of new purchases
- Practice good biosecurity especially between neighbouring flocks

If you do have it:

- Seek veterinary advice
- Recognise it and cull out possible early cases asap
- Disinfect after a positive case
- Avoid overcrowding sheep eg. indoor housing
- Do not keep offspring of OPA affected ewes