

# National Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathy Surveillance Program (NTSESP)

## Information for Northern Territory veterinarians

Co-ordinated by Animal Health Australia, the NTSESP program gathers surveillance information across Australia for two transmissible spongiform encephalopathy (TSE) diseases- Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (Mad Cow disease) in cattle and Scrapie in sheep and goats. Confirmation of freedom from these diseases in Australia is required to maintain international trading market access.

Private veterinarians are encouraged to collect samples for TSE exclusion from cases displaying the clinical signs listed below. Alternatively, the cases may be reported to the Regional Veterinary Officer for investigation.

### Eligibility

Cattle must be between **30 months** and **9 years** of age and showing clinical signs including;

- Behaviour or temperament change
- Inco-ordinated or staggered gait
- Muscle tremor
- Increased nervousness
- Paralysis
- Head pressing and circling

### Payments and support

The program subsidises the cost of the disease investigation by a private veterinarian, when a necropsy is performed on an eligible animal and the correct samples are submitted for TSE exclusion. Private veterinarians may claim \$300 for cattle submissions. Animal owners may also claim \$300.

DPIF also offers direct support to vets and their clients investigating animal disease by providing advice from vet pathologists regarding specimen collection, handling and transport and field assistance where an investigation exceeds the capacity of the practice.

### How to apply for the subsidy

To access NTSESP subsidies in the NT, private vets must;

1. Contact the NT NTSESP Co-ordinator, Sue Fitzpatrick on 8999 2123 or [Susanne.fitzpatrick@nt.gov.au](mailto:Susanne.fitzpatrick@nt.gov.au) to ensure suitable samples are collected.
2. Conduct the investigation, including treatment and euthanasia of the affected animals, and submit appropriate samples to the Berrimah Veterinary Laboratories (BVL).
3. Provide diagnostic feedback to the livestock owner.
4. Submit the claim, including an itemised tax invoice, to the NTSESP Co-ordinator.

See the NTSESP National Guidelines for Field Operations, training videos and guides at [www.animalhealthaustralia.com.au](http://www.animalhealthaustralia.com.au).

**For more information contact your regional Animal Biosecurity Office**

Darwin 8999 2035

Katherine 8973 9716

Tennant Creek 8962 4458

Alice Springs 8951 8181