



## CANADIAN SHEEP FEDERATION LAUNCHES BLUETONGUE INSURANCE

First Generation of Insurance for Bluetongue Disease in Sheep

---



### NEWS

**GUELPH** - The Canadian sheep industry has taken an innovative step to protect sheep farmers in the event of an outbreak of Bluetongue disease. Bluetongue Insurance for Sheep is a new commercial insurance program developed by the Canadian Sheep Federation (CSF) with the assistance of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's Private Sector Risk Management Partnerships (PSRMP) Program.

The Bluetongue Insurance program will provide sheep farmers with affordable insurance coverage for mortality, business interruption and consequential losses due to Bluetongue Disease – an insect borne viral disease of sheep. This voluntary insurance program will supplement funding provided to sheep farmers through current government agricultural assistance programs.

The impetus for development of Bluetongue Insurance was provided by recent import policy changes introduced by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency coupled with the discovery of Bluetongue disease in the United Kingdom and in several Northern European countries.

The Private Sector Risk Management Partnerships (PSRMP) Program is a federal initiative that offers financial and technical assistance to producer organizations for new agricultural risk management projects.

### QUOTES

*“This Government is committed to working in partnership with industry groups through the Private Sector Risk Management Partnerships (PSRMP) Program to provide farmers with the security they need to remain competitive. We applaud the Canadian Sheep Federation for its new insurance model that will benefit both the sheep industry and Canadian agriculture as a whole.” - Gerry Ritz, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food and Minister for the Canadian Wheat Board*

*“This innovative, affordable insurance is designed to provide sheep farmers with peace of mind by protecting them in the event that Bluetongue disease appears on their farm.” - Florence Henning, Chair of the CSF, Mayerthorpe, Alberta*

*“We hope that Bluetongue disease does not affect Canada’s sheep industry, but if it does, this new program will ensure that sheep farmers will have a tool that will allow us to recover our losses.”- Murray Emke, Sheep Producer*

*“We are stepping up our efforts to manage on-farm risk so that the Canadian sheep industry is at the forefront in disease risk management. In this regard we were pleased to work with the BMS Group, who have supported the development program from the outset. Their extensive experience and market relationships have been invaluable.” – Jennifer MacTavish, Executive Director, CSF*

FAST FACTS (Source: [www.cansheep.ca](http://www.cansheep.ca))

- There are over 11,000 sheep farmers in Canada
- The value of farmed sheep in Canada is over \$300M (Source: *Statistics Canada, 2006*)
- There are approximately 70,000 head of registered purebred sheep in Canada representing 48 different breeds

ABOUT THE CANADIAN SHEEP FEDERATION (CSF)

- Established in 1990, the Canadian Sheep Federation is a national non-profit organization that represents all Canadian sheep producers.
- Our mission is to work closely and cooperatively with all levels of government and industry-related organizations, both domestic and foreign, to further the viability, expansion and prosperity of the Canadian sheep and wool industry.

ABOUT BLUETONGUE DISEASE

- Bluetongue disease is caused by the Bluetongue virus. It is a non-contagious, insect-borne disease of mainly sheep and less frequently of cattle, goats, buffalo, deer and antelope.
- Symptoms can include high fever, excessive salivation, swelling of the face and tongue. Swelling of the lips and tongue gives the tongue its typical blue appearance, though this sign is confined to a minority of the animals. Recovery can be very slow.

ABOUT PRIVATE SECTOR RISK MANAGEMENT PARTNERSHIPS (PSRMP)

- The Private Sector Risk Management Partnerships (PSRMP) Program of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada is a federal initiative that offers financial and technical assistance to producer organizations for new agricultural risk management projects. PSRMP looks for projects that deal with predictable risks which may represent a significant threat to an individual farm operation but generally only a minor risk to the sector or its market. These projects focus on risks that are not currently covered by government programs or the private sector.
- Canadian national, regional or provincial producer organizations representing member-producers who are directly involved in the production of agricultural products are eligible to apply for assistance.

#### ABOUT OUR INSURANCE PARTNERS

- Bluetongue Insurance is provided by the **Echelon General Insurance Company** in conjunction with their partners **Sylvite Financial Services Inc.** and administrative broker **The Precept Group Inc.**
- **Sylvite Financial Services Inc.** is a division of the Sylvite Group of Companies, one of Canada's largest diversified agricultural services companies. Initially formed to meet the insurance needs of the farmer, Sylvite Financial Services Inc. has evolved into an innovative and dynamic financial services firm with deep roots in the agricultural markets.
- **The Precept Group Inc.:** Insurance and Risk Management was formed in 1998 with the merger of three well established insurance brokerage firms, with roots going back to 1912.
- Reinsurance will be provided by **Endurance Reinsurance of America (Endurance Re)**, a Delaware domestic insurer and reinsurer with policyholders' surplus of \$592,863,197 as of December 31, 2007. Endurance Re is a subsidiary of Endurance Specialty Holdings Ltd., a Bermuda-based specialty provider of insurance and reinsurance on a global basis, with over 700 employees. Endurance Specialty Holdings Ltd. is publicly traded on the NYSE (ticker symbol: ENH) with \$7 billion in assets and over \$2 billion in shareholders' equity.

#### TO LEARN MORE:

Jennifer MacTavish  
Executive Director  
*Canadian Sheep Federation*  
130 Malcolm Road  
Guelph, ON  
N1K 1B1  
Phone: 519.824.6018  
Fax: 866.909.5360

CSF Website: [www.cansheep.ca](http://www.cansheep.ca)

#### Bluetongue Disease:

Dorothy W. Geale, B.Sc.(Hons) PhD., DVM  
Senior Staff Veterinarian, Foreign Animal Disease  
Animal Health Division  
Canadian Food Inspection Agency  
Unit 203 185 King street  
Peterborough, Ontario  
K9J 2R6  
Phone: 705.750.4962  
Cellular: 613.614.5768  
Fax: 705.750.4963

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada:

Media Relations

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada

Ottawa, Ontario

Phone: 1-613-759-7972

Toll free: 1-866-345-7972

*Agriculture and Agri-food Canada is pleased to participate in the production of this program, and is committed to working with our industry partners to increase public awareness of the importance of the agri-food industry to Canada.*