

Sheep Control Order

What is a control order?

Governments may use control orders to respond to issues of health and safety. The Government of Yukon is issuing this Control Order pursuant to the *Animal Health Act* to balance the responsible development of a domestic sheep and goat industry with protecting the health of wild thimhorn sheep and mountain goats.

Why is a Control Order necessary to protect wild sheep and goat health?

Wild thimhorn sheep and mountain goats are at risk of developing respiratory disease if they come into contact with domestic sheep and domestic goats. The disease can spread rapidly within wild sheep and goat populations, causing high numbers of deaths and significantly reducing the size and health of populations.

When is this happening?

The Control Order comes into effect January 1, 2020. Owners are encouraged to contact the Animal Health Unit and Agriculture Branch for more information and to access government support to comply with the order.

What does this mean for you, if you keep sheep or goats?

If you want to raise sheep and goats in Yukon, you must be in compliance with the Control Order by January 1, 2020.

How to comply with the order:

Before the Control Order comes into effect, sheep and goat owners must ensure their animals are being kept below 1,000 meters in elevation. In addition, all owners of sheep or goats, whether they own a single animal or operate a farm with many animals, must comply with the following conditions:

- all sheep and goats are maintained in an enclosure approved by an inspector before January 1, 2020 and annually thereafter;
- all sheep and goats have some form of permanent identification, e.g., ear tags;
- records are maintained for each individual sheep and goat;
- all sheep and goats are tested annually for pathogens of concern;
- any sheep or goats that escape from an enclosure, or while being transported, must be reported immediately to the chief veterinary officer; and
- sheep and goats can only be moved into Yukon, or out of Yukon, by permit.

Enforcement

Once the Control Order is in effect, violating the order will be an offence under the *Animal Health Act*. Inspectors will enforce the order. At any time before or after the Control Order comes into effect, staff from the Animal Health Unit at the Department of Environment and from the Agriculture Branch at the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources are available to provide support to owners to comply with the Control Order.



Contact

For general questions about the Control Order and testing for respiratory pathogens:

Animal Health Unit
Government of Yukon
867-667-5600 or
1-800-661-0408, ext. 5600

P.O. Box 2703 (V-7)
Whitehorse, YT
Y1A 2C6

animalhealth@gov.yk.ca

For questions about fencing specifications and support available:

Agriculture Branch
Government of Yukon
867-667-5838 or
1-800-661-0408, ext. 5838

agriculture@gov.yk.ca



Testing/monitoring

As a condition of the Control Order, all domestic sheep and goats must be tested annually for pathogens of concern that cause respiratory disease. Nasal swabs will be collected from each domestic sheep and goat. If a sheep or goat tests positive on any sample, it will be considered a potential carrier of respiratory disease. In that case, the sheep or goat would be ordered to be destroyed and the owner would be compensated under the *Animal Health Act* (see below). If pathogens of concern are not detected, the animal will be tested again in the following year. The cost of all testing will be paid by the Animal Health Unit. Further details about the testing protocol will be available in 2019. Please contact the Animal Health Unit at animalhealth@gov.yk.ca with any questions about testing and monitoring.

What if I no longer wish to keep sheep or goats?

Sheep and goat owners who choose to no longer keep sheep or goats have two options they can take before the Control Order comes into effect:

- transfer ownership of their sheep and goat(s) to someone else who will comply with the terms of the Control Order; or
- slaughter their sheep and goat(s).

Owners who choose to slaughter their sheep and goats before the Control Order comes into effect may be eligible for compensation. Either option must be completed before January 1, 2020. Otherwise, an owner will be in violation of the *Animal Health Act* and may not be eligible for compensation if their sheep and goats are ordered destroyed or other costs are incurred to comply with the Control Order after it comes into effect.

Destruction, salvage and compensation after January 1, 2020

If an animal is ordered destroyed in the course of complying with this Control Order, the owner is eligible to apply for compensation. The amount of compensation is up to a maximum amount as laid out in the federal government's *Compensation for Destroyed Animals Regulations* (SOR/2000-233). To salvage the value of animals ordered destroyed, animals are most likely to be ordered destroyed through slaughter. The presence of *M. ovi*, for example, would not reduce the value of meat from the animal. Animals may be placed under a quarantine order under conditions to keep them further separated until they reach an appropriate weight. Farmers will obtain the salvage value based on the animal's live weight. This amount will be deducted from compensation paid under the *Animal Health Act*. The *Animal Health Act* and *Animal Health Regulation* provide further details on compensation, including the appeal process. Contact the Animal Health Unit or Agriculture Branch if you have questions on this process.

What about buying new sheep or goats or moving them on or off my property?

Once the Control Order comes into effect, you will be required to have a permit to move any domestic sheep or goats into or out of the territory. Domestic sheep and goats can move within the territory from one approved enclosure to another if owners take reasonable steps to prevent the animals from escaping during transport. Owners will be required to keep a record of movements (e.g., animal purchases, sales, or slaughter).

Fencing

Prior to January 1, 2020, livestock owners will be required to adhere to fencing standards for containing domestic sheep and goats, and fencing will be inspected annually.

Specific standards will be developed over the winter in discussion with stakeholders. The goal of the fencing requirement is to maintain separation between wild and domestic sheep and goats and prevent nose to nose contact. Fencing options may include the use of offsets and electrified wires or a separate physical fence.

Funding is available to off-set the cost of upgrades or installation of new fencing required to meet the new standards.

Contact Yukon's Agriculture Branch at 867-667-5838 or agriculture@gov.yk.ca to obtain detailed fencing requirements, recommended designs, and information about what funding is available.

What happens if any of my sheep or goats escape their enclosure?

If a domestic sheep or goat escapes while under your care, you must report the escape immediately to the Chief Veterinary Officer. To report an escaped animal, call 867-667-5600.