



Date	31 January 2025
To	General Member Circular Recipients
Ref	GM25-04
Subject	PETA campaign on sheep shearing practices in New Zealand – sector response

Introduction

PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals), an organisation which actively promotes veganism and advocates against the consumption of animal products, has launched a campaign targeting sheep shearing practices in New Zealand, alleging instances of animal cruelty within the industry.

The campaign features undercover footage showing sheep being mistreated, injured, or handled roughly during shearing.

PETA is using the footage to push for changes in shearing practices, encouraging brands to drop wool from their supply chains, and promoting alternatives like synthetic (polyester) or plant-based fibres.

PETA has called on the Government to mandate cameras in all shearing sheds across the country. They argue that such measures would enhance transparency and accountability within the wool industry and prevent animal cruelty.

The Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) has launched an investigation.

Approach

Beef + Lamb New Zealand (B+LNZ) is working with the New Zealand Veterinary Association and the New Zealand Shearing Contractors' Association on guidance for farmers, shearers and veterinarians.

We will send these resources to you so you can share these with your farmers and other stakeholders.

A woolshed poster is available on the [B+LNZ Knowledge Hub](#). This can be used as a starting point for a conversation with shearing contractors.

New Zealand Farm Assurance Incorporated is also closely monitoring the situation and is liaising with meat processing companies, farmers and MPI.

Messages

Below are some suggested key messages you may wish to tailor in the event you receive questions from stakeholders.

- Any mistreatment of animals is unacceptable and we support the investigation by New Zealand's Ministry for Primary Industries.
- PETA's campaign against wool fundamentally misrepresents the realities of sheep farming in New Zealand

Note: This circular is **confidential** to Meat Industry Association Members and Affiliate Members

Representing New Zealand Meat Processors, Marketers and Exporters

- Farmers and shearers are committed to the health and welfare of their animals, as this is essential for producing high-quality meat and wool
- New Zealand has among the world's most stringent animal welfare laws, supported by robust systems and processes designed to identify and eliminate poor practices, ensuring high standards of care
- Sweeping claims that all wool production is unethical are misleading and undermine the values of an industry dedicated to sustainability and animal care
- Shearing is a necessary and humane practice when done correctly
- Most sheep cannot naturally shed their fleece. Without regular shearing, they face severe health risks, including overheating and infections, which can lead to death
- Wool is also one of the most sustainable natural fibres, offering a renewable, biodegradable, and environmentally friendly alternative to synthetic materials
- Campaigns that discredit the entire industry ignore the significant environmental and ethical benefits of responsibly produced wool
- New Zealand's red meat sector welcomes scrutiny but PETA's campaign of misinformation distorts the realities of sheep shearing and New Zealand farming
- PETA opposes sheep shearing entirely, despite its necessity for animal welfare, and uses selective footage to push for changes in shearing practices, pressure brands to drop wool, and promote synthetic or plant-based alternatives
- PETA's goal is to end all wool production, regardless of the welfare consequences for sheep.

For more information, please contact:

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