



LIVESTOCK WELFARE COORDINATING COMMITTEE

Established 1978

Livestock Welfare Coordinating Committee
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POSITION STATEMENT

THE MULES OPERATION AS APPLIED TO WOOL SHEEP

The Livestock Welfare Coordinating Committee is a non-government organisation set up in 1978 to promote the welfare of farm livestock at all stages of production. It has wide representation of virtually all national organisations involved in the process of red meat production, including:

AFS
DAWS
GDARD
IMQAS
LAWA
MPO
NAHF
NERPO
NSPCA
NWGA
RMAA
RMIF
RPO
RuVASA
SA Studbook
SABS
SAFA
SAFLA
SAMGA
SAOBC
SAPPO
SAPS
SASAS

SAVA
SAVC
UP – FVS

After due consideration of the issue of using the Mules Operation in wool sheep, it reached a unanimous consensus that the procedure could not be condoned in South Africa.
We urge all parties to assist in bringing this unacceptable practice to a complete end.

The farm procedure known as "Mulesing" or the "Mules Operation" was developed to reduce the susceptibility of wool-bearing sheep to blowfly strike in excessively skin-pleated sheep. However, any justification for this procedure is removed by breeding more plain-bodied sheep with minimal skin wrinkling. The overwhelming majority of wool producers have converted to plain-bodied sheep in South Africa, rendering the use of mulesing unjustified and unacceptable in view of it being unnecessary, painful and accompanied by risks like infection and blowfly strike. The LWCC therefore recommends that the Mules Operation be declared unethical and unacceptable for use in any sheep in South Africa.

Adopted: May 2011
Accepted: August 2013