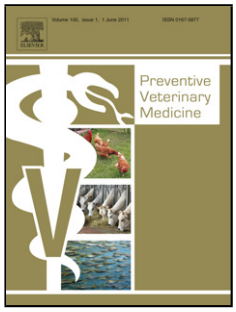

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A longitudinal study of faecal shedding of *Yersinia enterocolitica* and *Yersinia pseudotuberculosis* by Merino lambs in south-eastern Australia.

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Abstract

A prospective longitudinal study was conducted to investigate potential risk factors for faecal shedding of *Yersinia enterocolitica* and *Y. pseudotuberculosis* by Merino lambs in four flocks in south-eastern Australia. The primary aims of the study were to determine the seasonal patterns of shedding of pathogenic *Y. enterocolitica* and *Y. pseudotuberculosis*, and to evaluate putative risk factors for faecal shedding of these organisms, including worm egg count, live-weight and growth rate.

The risk of shedding varied markedly between *Yersinia* spp., farms, seasons and years. Shedding of *Y. pseudotuberculosis* occurred predominately in winter, whereas *Y. enterocolitica* was commonly isolated from faeces throughout the year. Moderate to high prevalences of shedding of each organism occurred in the absence of outbreaks of yersiniosis. In general, for shedding of *Y. pseudotuberculosis*, animals