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## Medusahead Management Workshop Recap

On May 2, 2017, Fresno and Tulare County UC Cooperative Extension hosted a Medusahead Management Workshop at the Lindcove Research and Extension Center, Exeter. Twenty people attended and were eligible for continuing education credits through the Department of Pesticide Regulation or the Society for Range Management.

Slides from the presentations at the workshop are now available online. Visit <http://ucanr.edu/sites/livestockandnaturalresources/Events/> to view or download them.



## Beef Conference • Friday, May 12-Saturday, May 13, 2017

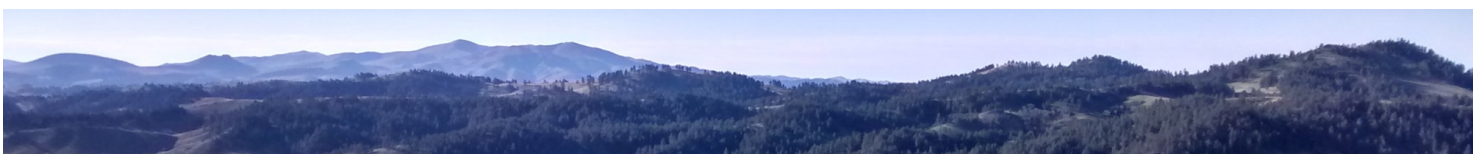
**Piccadilly Inn Airport**  
5115 E. McKinley Avenue, Fresno, CA 93727

**Friday, May 12, 2017**—Young Cattlemen's tour of Fresno County ranches. No cost, bring your own lunch. Vans depart Piccadilly Inn Airport at 8:00 AM.

**Saturday, May 13, 2017**—Fresno State Beef Conference check-in begins at 8:00 AM. Featured speakers include Burke Teichert of Teichert Management & Consulting and Bill Borrer of Tehama Angus Ranch. Program includes lunch.

**Register online by May 12! • \$30 • [http://ucanr.edu/csuf\\_spring](http://ucanr.edu/csuf_spring)**

**Call Rebecca Ozeran at (559) 241-6564 with any questions.**





## Sheep Measles

### What is it, why does it cost me money, and how do I prevent it?

*The following is a guest article submitted by Dr. Jennifer McDougle, Animal Health Branch Veterinarian with the CDFA.*

#### What are Sheep Measles?

Sheep “measles” is a tapeworm (*Taenia ovis*) that affects several species. Sheep and goats pick up this tapeworm when grazing upon pasture that has been infected with the tapeworm cysts. The sheep are not the final host for this tapeworm, but an intermediate host. Once they pick up the tapeworm, it enters the muscles of the sheep. Infected carcasses that enter the slaughter house are condemned.

#### How would a pasture become infected?

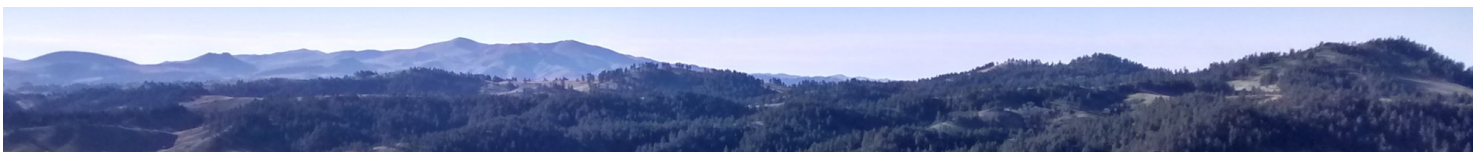
The pasture is contaminated by the final host’s infected feces. The final host for this tapeworm is the dog.

Dogs become infected with the tapeworm by eating the offal or carcasses of infected sheep or goats.

Once infected, the tapeworm goes to the intestinal tract of the dog and reaches maturity there. The dog passes the infected cysts in feces that get deposited on the pasture. This ensures the continued lifecycle of the parasite when the sheep or goats graze upon these infected pastures.

Dogs, coyotes, wolves, foxes, and rarely cats can all become infected with sheep measles and pass the infected cysts onto pasture.

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## Sheep measles cont'd

The infection cannot be detected in the live animal. Sheep and goats rarely appear ill and therefore the disease will not be apparent until the animal goes to slaughter and the carcass is condemned for the visible cysts within the carcass muscle.

Dogs may have diarrhea, but also rarely show clinical signs of infection.

## How do I prevent Sheep Measles from affecting my sheep and goats?

Prevention should be concentrated on the working dogs that are around the sheep the most.

It is recommended that working dogs be dewormed every four months with praziquantel dewormer and avoid feeding offal or sheep/goat meat to dogs.

If land is frequently used for hiking or other activities where people bring their dogs, some sheep farmers prevent unknown dogs from being on their land or require that the dogs have proof of deworming 48 hours prior to being on the land.

More questions? Please call the California Department of Food and Agriculture Animal Health Branch Tulare District at 559-685-3500.

**SHEEP MEASLE EGGS CAN SPREAD OVER A WIDE AREA**

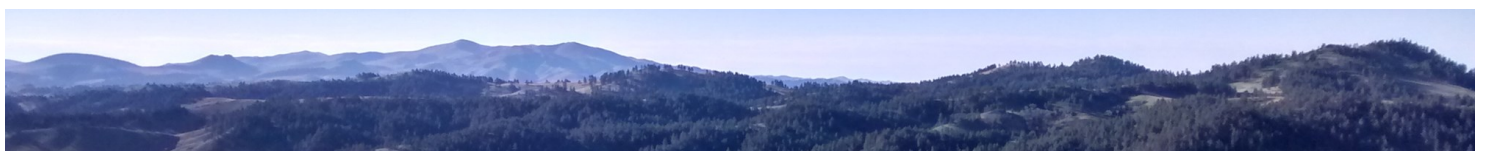
**ONE DOG CAN CONTAMINATE A NUMBER OF FARMS (NOT JUST YOURS)**

**1x = 6 months contamination**

**OVIS MANAGEMENT**

*The Meat Industry and Farmers working together*

**0800 222 011**



## Weedy Worries

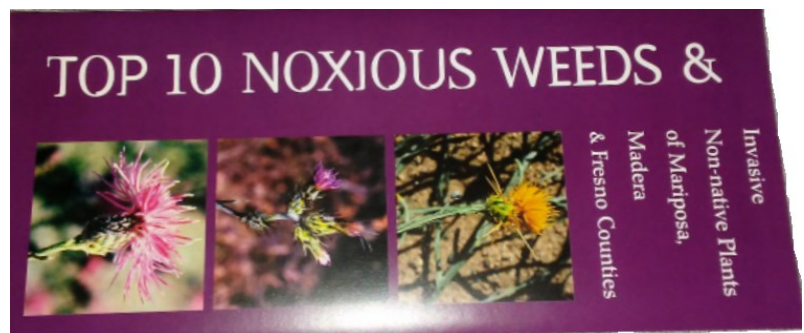
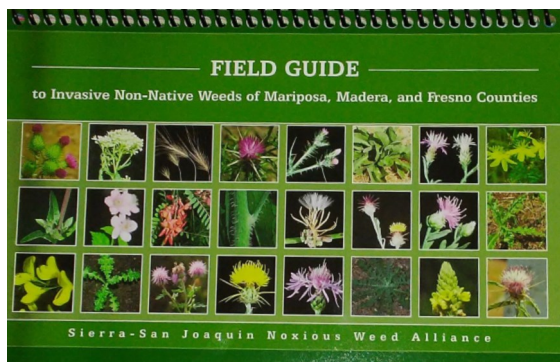
With all the recent rain, rangelands are thriving. Unfortunately, so are many weeds.

### What are some weeds to watch for?

You are probably familiar with many of the most common weeds in our area. Yellow starthistle, foxtail barley (foxtails), fiddleneck, puncturevine, and giant reed or arundo are found in many parts of Fresno and Madera counties. Yellow starthistle can be toxic to horses, and puncturevine can be toxic to all livestock. The other weeds may not be toxic, but can be irritating to livestock (such as foxtails) and out-compete better forage options.

### How do I figure out what weed this is?

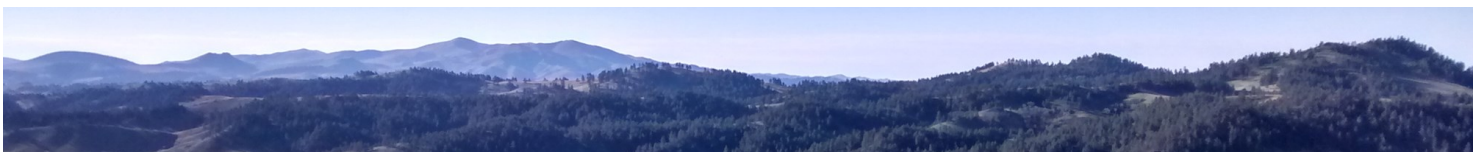
There are a lot of great resources to identify weeds, including UC publications like *Weeds of California and Other Western States*, or the online Weed Research and Information Center (<http://wric.ucdavis.edu/>). Your local Extension Office may have additional resources for you to identify weeds on your property. However, there are a few things you should do before you start flipping through the pages.



The local Field Guide to Invasive Non-Native Weeds and the Top 10 Noxious Weeds and Invasive Non-Native Plants brochure are available in limited quantity at Rebecca's office. Stop by 550 E Shaw Ave., Suite 210-B, in Fresno to pick up free copies!

**1** - The easiest time to identify most plants is when they have BOTH leaves and flowers to look at. A lot of weed guides and keys rely on leaf shape and flower appearance to narrow down the possibilities.

*This article continues* ►



## *Weedy Worries cont'd*

**2** - Pick a few weeds to examine and compare to weed guides, or take lots of pictures. If you pick specimens, put them in a plastic bag so they stay green as long as possible. If you take photos, try to put a pen or another object in a photo for a size reference. Having 1-inch flowers versus 3-inch flowers makes a big difference!

### **Which of these is the worst?**

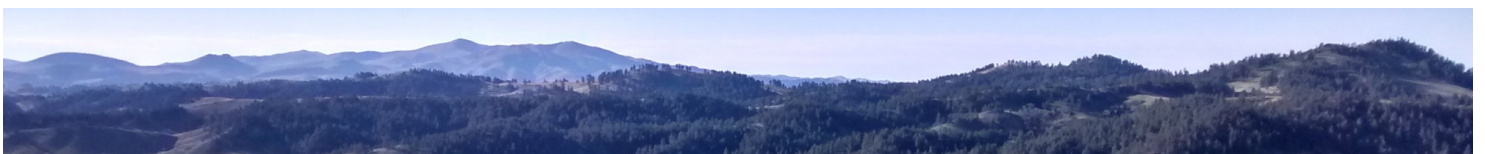
Soon you will be sick of hearing this answer: “it depends”. Some weeds spread quickly. Some weeds have irritating seeds. Some weeds accumulate toxic compounds. Really, the “worst” weeds are those that you find most intolerable on your property. In fact, many plants that are considered to be awful weeds in other areas are some of the most reliable livestock forages here—such as filaree and wild oats.

Yellow starthistle is often at the top of the list for “worst weed”. Not only is yellow starthistle unpleasant to walk through, but it also competes with forages for water and can be fatal to horses. Medusahead is a grass weed that is becoming more of a problem in our area, because it also outcompetes better grass forages and is not palatable to livestock.

### **What can we do about it?**

Weeds can be controlled in various ways. Early detection is your best defense - if you find only a few plants on your property, it is much easier to control the population. For example, the easiest way to get rid of yellow starthistle is to pull it out by hand - especially before there are flowers. If you pull it after there are flowers, be sure to dispose of the flowerheads because they may still produce seeds.

For weed identification and control information, visit <http://wric.ucdavis.edu/> or contact Rebecca at 559-241-6564 or [rkozeran@ucanr.edu](mailto:rkozeran@ucanr.edu). She can work with you to identify plants and can connect you to control options. In Fresno county, you can also contact Kurt Hembree, the weed advisor, at 559-241-7520 or [kjhembree@ucanr.edu](mailto:kjhembree@ucanr.edu).



## Avian Influenza in the News

There are two main categories of avian influenza viruses (bird flu): low pathogenic and highly pathogenic. Low pathogenic avian influenza (LPAI) causes milder signs of the disease. Wild birds with LPAI usually don't show any signs of infection and there is little impact on domestic poultry.

On the other hand, highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) is especially concerning because it can be transmitted to humans, as well as negatively impacting flocks of backyard and commercial poultry. Birds from commercial poultry flocks infected with HPAI are not used for human food, even individual birds that did not exhibit signs of disease.



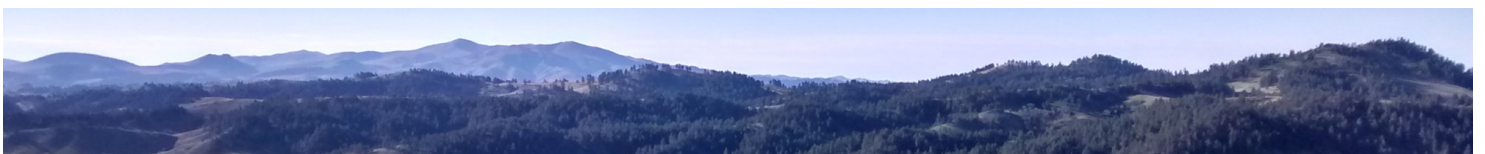
HPAI has been detected in Washington, Oregon, Iowa, Wisconsin, and Minnesota in the past 5 years. Highly-pathogenic avian influenza was documented in Tennessee in March 2017. As such, we strongly recommend that California poultry owners assess and maintain their biosecurity measures to prevent infection of their flocks with HPAI. Infection usually comes from viruses shed by wild birds.

UC Cooperative Extension Specialist, Maurice Pitesky, and UC Davis Center for Animal Disease Modeling and Surveillance Director, Beatriz Martínez-López, have put together several resources for poultry owners regarding avian influenza risks.

There is a free online survey that can help you identify biosecurity risks on your property, available here: <http://www.surveymoz.com/s3/3232118/Biosecurity-Avian-Survey-copy-without-rec> (*in English*) and here: <http://www.surveymoz.com/s3/3362470/Avian-Influenza-Biosecurity-Avian-Survey-Espanol> (*in Spanish*). The survey will be available until June 1, 2017.

The UC Poultry Census aims to build a network between backyard poultry owners and UC poultry information. If you participate in the census, you will receive direct updates about avian influenza outbreaks near you. The census keeps all your personally identifiable information private and it will not be used for regulation or enforcement. You can sign up here: [http://ucanr.edu/sites/poultry/California\\_Poultry\\_Census/](http://ucanr.edu/sites/poultry/California_Poultry_Census/)

If you have additional poultry questions, this flowchart can direct you to the expert on your topic: <http://ucanr.edu/sites/poultry/contact/>.



## Update on Needs Assessment for Local Extension Program

Rebecca Ozeran, the livestock & natural resources advisor for Fresno and Madera counties, has received some very useful input from a few local ranchers and other individuals. Some key concerns that have been raised include weed issues, negative public views of animal agriculture, and an interest in direct marketing of beef and other animal products to local customers.

Rebecca still wants to hear from you! In order for her to put her efforts toward what matters most to you, she needs your feedback. You can fill out an online survey at <http://ucanr.edu/2017needs>, or contact Rebecca to set up a time to share what you think she should focus on. You can reach her at:

**rkozeran@ucanr.edu • 559-241-6564**

Thank you for your help - we will do our best if we work together.  
If you have already spoken with Rebecca or taken the survey, THANK YOU!



*Happy spring!*

If you would like to see a particular topic in this newsletter, let us know! Contact Rebecca Ozeran with your suggestions.



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