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## NATIONAL VELVET ACCREDITATION SCHEME

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**Chairperson, NVAS**

This season has been relatively uneventful, with velvet trading at a slightly lower price than last year, both here and in New Zealand but still at reasonable profit margins.

We now have Marika McKinnon in administration doing an excellent job and our thanks to her for the successful management of this season.

The NVAS committee made a submission to the AVA (Australian Veterinary Association) Policy Advisory Council in May of 2011 as the AVA policy on the farming of deer was due at that time for review. Happily there have been no changes to the AVA velvetting procedure policy.

The velvetting procedure involves the annual removal of living tissue from the male deer. It is, and always will be, a controversial issue both with respect to the welfare aspects of the procedure and the prescription and dispensing of the drugs required for sedation and analgesia.

It is therefore very important to maintain the standards set by the NVAS and to be accredited. The NVAS provides a buffer against those sections of the community that would have velvetting banned. It highlights the importance of belonging to a programme that is specifically designed to teach correct and humanely acceptable methods of velvetting.

The industry has made no changes to the velvetting procedure regarding types of drugs for sedation or local anaesthetic. We will continue to follow New Zealand, using xylazine for sedation and lignocaine for local anaesthetic.

Please note that xylazine does NOT provide a local anaesthesia. Local anaesthetic must be administered as well as using xylazine.

### **Method of administration:**

The amount of lignocaine in the harvested stick of velvet will be greatly reduced to well within acceptable levels of residue if the tourniquet is applied with consistent pressure around the whole circumference of the pedicle before the administration of lignocaine.

The lignocaine is injected below the tourniquet around the base at a dose of 1 ml per centimeter. A complete ring block with overlapping blebs appears to provide the most effective analgesia.

### **SUMMARY –**

**The best analgesia results from:**

- 1. A higher dose per centimeter. ie. 1 ml/centimeter,**
- 2 Increased number of injection sites. ie. 6-8 sites around the circumference,**
- 3. Taking time to administer the local anaesthetic to the pedicle,**
- 4. Injecting closer to the antler than the head.**

Please be aware that all sticks of velvet for export are to be individually tagged. There are tags available from the DIAA by contacting Marika McKinnon.

The NVAS wishes our accredited deer farmers a successful and profitable year.