

►► **ANIMAL WELFARE**

Spray a salve for mulesing

By **BRIAN CLANCY**

IT MAY only have an interim registration for the treatment of mulesed lambs, but Tri-Solfen, the new three-in-one pain relief spray, is set to create opportunities across all livestock.

Tri-Solfen, which contains anaesthetic, antiseptic and a blood-clotting agent, was launched in Melbourne last week.

The treatment was developed by NSW pediatrician Dr Meredith Sheil, who is also a wool producer on the NSW southern tablelands.

Dr Sheil began work on a pain-relief spray several years ago.

"The mulesing debate just hastened the development," she said.

The research company, Animal Ethics, finalised the development of the product which is being produced by the Dandenong animal health company, Cattlekare, and distributed through the veterinary supplier, Provet.

Animal ethics manager Allan Giffard said that because Tri-Solfen was being sold under an interim registration of the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority, it was classified as a S4 product and was available only through a veterinarian.

Mr Giffard hoped that the product would become more accessible next year after it received full registration.

Mr Giffard said registration could be sought to use Tri-Solfen for many processes, such as dehorning cattle.

In the meantime, Tri-Solfen is

being recommended as a treatment for mulesed lambs.

It is applied in 2ml doses, with application rates ranging from 6ml for young lambs to 12ml for lambs heavier than 20kg.

The cost of a treatment ranges from 60c to \$1.20.

Five-litre packs cost \$650 and a 20-litre drum \$1800.

Dr Sheil said studies showed treated lambs recovered much quicker than untreated lambs after mulesing.

Treated lambs were found to resume eating sooner and showed fewer signs of distress in the crucial eight hours after treatment.

Wurrook Merino stud breeder Paul Walton said he was convinced of the spray's benefits.

With 8000 lambs to mulse, Mr Walton has been using the spray for three weeks.

"The big advantage is that the lamb mothers up much faster," he said.

He said Wurrook mulesed lambs at four weeks and while this created a smaller wound, the treated lamb was more prone to mothering problems.

Mr Giffard said producers who used Tri-Solfen during its interim registration period were also being asked to complete a questionnaire regarding its use.

He said responses and user comments would form an important component of an application for full registration.