

ARE WILD DOGS BITING INTO YOUR PROFITS?

Wild dogs are a key issue for Australia's livestock producers, with about two-thirds of producers regularly experiencing wild dog problems on their properties. Wild dogs can cause significant damage to livestock production enterprises, particularly sheep and goat producers, through predation and disease transfer. Wild dog attacks are estimated to have an economic impact between \$64 million to \$111 million annually.

About the impact

Maintaining a viable sheep and goat enterprise is almost impossible when wild dogs are present. These small livestock animals are susceptible because they are a good size for wild dogs to attack and because of the way they respond.

When sheep and goats see a wild dog, they usually bleat, form a mob, circle, break and run. Whether a wild dog is hungry or not, this fleeing

“Unless wild dogs are controlled, attacks will be ongoing and grazing small livestock will no longer be viable.”

behaviour instinctively triggers a response from the dog to chase and attack.

A wild dog can attack many individual sheep or goats as they break from the circling mob. These animals are often left maimed and wounded.

Unless wild dogs are controlled or physically kept away from sheep and goats, attacks will be ongoing and grazing small livestock will no longer be viable. In western Queensland alone, the region has seen a 75% drop in sheep numbers, and this affects the social and economic fabric of rural communities.

WILD DOGS

A known or potential risk to at least

14

endangered or vulnerable native mammals, reptiles & birds¹

Ongoing livestock predation creates



distress, anger & anxiety

among landholders & their families²

\$64 - \$111m/ year

lost to the Australian economy & agricultural sector³

Canis familiaris

Dingoes & wild domestic dogs are the same species⁴

Found across

85%

of mainland Australia.

Considered common and not threatened⁵

Wild dog predation limited growth of a



koala population

even while other threats were mitigated⁶

What's being done

The National Wild Dog Action Plan (NWDAP) is Australia's blueprint strategy for wild dog management that guides state, regional and local plans and works with government and industry bodies. It promotes evidence-based, best practice tools and methods aimed at protecting agriculture, the environment and community wellbeing. If you're dealing with wild dogs, NWDAP has resources that can assist.

For the NWDAP and industry, it's not about the eradication of wild dogs - it's about control. Management measures are critical to ensure producers can protect their livestock from wild dog attacks and maintain a viable business.

"It's not about the eradication of wild dogs - it's about control."

Without wild dog control mechanisms, producers are almost powerless to protect the welfare of their animals - which begs the question of when does the welfare of one animal trump the welfare of another?

Each state has different wild dog management rules in place. However, nation-wide, people are obligated to use control methods that minimise any potential pain, fear or distress. These obligations encompass a wide range of activities from the capture and relocation of animals, through to poisoning, shooting or trapping.

Key resources

The NWDAP shares resources to help landholders manage wild dogs on their property. Some of these are:

- **WildDogScan** - a free community-designed website and smartphone app that allows you to record observations and evidence of wild dogs and dingoes and control actions in your local area.
- **PestSmart** - provides science-based resources, tools, and strategies for effective management of invasive vertebrate pests, supporting land managers, farmers, and communities.
- **Glovebox guide to managing wild dogs** - covers management aspects including biology and ecology, wild dog identification and signs, their impacts, management options, safety, policy and legislation.
- **NWDAP News** - the NWDAP program's monthly newsletter sharing the latest on wild dog management.

More information

Find out more about the impacts of wild dogs and access resources at:

www.wilddogplan.org.au

