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Wild dog control is possible with concerted effort



While wild dogs remain a scourge for sheep producers across Australia, results from Australian Wool Innovation's Community Wild Dog Control Initiative show progress is possible when protecting the national flock from wild dogs.

Over the past 5 years, woolgrowers have invested over \$7 million to tackle the wild dog threat, through their R&D and Marketing body, Australian Wool Innovation Limited (AWI).

This investment includes:

- research to preserve access to existing bait technologies and to develop new baits
- research documenting the social impacts of wild dogs
- national and regional coordination of dog control
- local wild dog control groups willing to work together to apply a nil-tenure model.

Since initiatives commenced, 88 local groups covering over 2 million square kilometres have been supported by AWI across all mainland states.

On-ground work by the landholder groups has included planning and coordination, training, field days, as well as extensive trapping and baiting.



AWGA - News Update

AWI funding is available to support more groups, for more information please visit the [Wild dogs, Foxes & Pigs](#) page on www.wool.com.

AWI recently surveyed over 2200 landholders involved in projects funded by the Community Wild Dog Control Initiative. Landholders across Queensland, NSW, Western Australia, South Australia, ACT and Victoria provided comment from both a personal and community scale. The results included:

- 25% of respondents had de-stocked, but now intended to re-introduce sheep, and 33% of respondents intend to increase sheep numbers on their property.
- Importantly, 60% of respondents indicated that their feeling of personal wellbeing had improved and 51% reported positive biodiversity impacts.

Additionally in a subset of 251 landholders, stock losses reduced by more than 70%, from an average of 310 per farmer to 86 per farmer. This equates to around \$19,000 in benefit assuming a nominal average replacement value of \$86 per head.

National Wild Dog Facilitator Greg Mifsud has been heavily involved in local groups that have been supported by the AWI Community Wild Dog Control Initiative.

"It has really provided a well-deserved boost for community groups across the country; from providing the catalyst for new groups to get going and commence community control efforts in regions where wild dogs are an emerging problem to really providing genuine on-ground support for wild dog control in areas where they have been an ongoing problem for some time."

Mr Mifsud urged landholders to look at all available opportunities to work cooperatively with local groups and neighbouring properties but also to ensure they utilised all available opportunities to take part in regional and state funded wild dog management programmes.

"There are a lot of local and statewide government funded programmes out there to take advantage of in addition to the AWI Wild Dog Control Initiative. If landholders aren't sure of where these programmes are at or how to get involved then they should contact their local authorities or the AWI funded Wild Dog Coordinator for your region for further information."

An important support for the on-ground effort of growers has been the ability to conduct aerial baiting at a higher density, under a localised 12-month permit from the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA). This followed a 4-year AWI funded trial conducted through the Invasive Animal CRC, which found that the mortality of wild dogs increases significantly when the density of 1080 baits is lifted from 10 baits/km (55% mortality) to 40 baits/km (90% mortality).

Meanwhile, the next generation baiting toxin (PAPP) approaches commercialization, currently with the APVMA for registration.

AWI General Manager of Research Dr Paul Swan stressed how significantly AWI views the issue.

"Wild dogs represent one of the greatest threats to the sheep and wool industry in large areas of Australia. For a number of years now, AWI has been quietly getting on with the job developing the tools and the local and regional networks needed to have an impact on this insidious threat - and we are starting to see positive results across wide areas. However, while we should commend the efforts of the many contributors to these on-ground efforts, we should make no mistake: there is a long way to go."

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