



Media Release



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Call for funding to avoid wild dog peri-urban problem

Livestock SA is calling on the State Government to reinstate funding for a wild dog trapper in northern South Australia to ensure that wild dogs do not continue to move further south and become a problem in peri-urban areas.

Funding for the state's only dog trapper ran out in April when a Federal Government drought support program ended, which has meant SA currently has no wild dog trapper.

Livestock SA believes \$300,000 would mean wild dog control could be undertaken at a level that would protect the agricultural industry and reduce the threat facing peri-urban areas.

President Geoff Power says Livestock SA is concerned that, with good rain in the north of the state, wild dog numbers will continue to grow – both outside and inside the dog fence.

“The problem is ongoing and threatens the future growth and economic prospects of the sheep industry. There are dogs killing sheep at an accelerating level and government support is needed,” Mr Power said.

“We have seen what has happened in other states – wild dogs have decimated the Queensland sheep industry and in Western Australia. In WA, there are only 200,000 sheep left in the pastoral areas because of wild dog predation and overall, there's about 1.5 million sheep left mainly due to wild dog predation, whereas 20 years ago, there were 20 million sheep.

“Without a wild dog trapper, the chances of wild dogs getting down to peri-urban areas of SA are higher. If wild dogs were in the Mount Lofty Ranges, it is possible they would cause havoc in residential areas, as they have in similar areas of Queensland.

“The mandate of Natural Resource Management Boards is to control weeds and pest animals and the wild dog is one of the most destructive pests farmers face. Despite increasing NRM levies, there is not enough money being committed to this basic level of pest control – including from all NRM Boards and the State Government. We are really questioning how our NRM levy is being used.”

Mr Power says wild dogs are causing problems outside the dog fence but inside the dog fence, they have been seen east of Burra, there has been one at Black Rock for the past couple of years which has done a lot of damage and one was killed at Port Neill in March.

“At a forum at Port Augusta two years ago, our members agreed two doggers were needed to tackle the problem. One dogger would cost \$150,000 and an immediate commitment of that amount would at least mean the current trapper could be re-employed while another is hired.”

ENDS

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