



AgForce and BQ mobilise wild dog army across Burnett

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MORE than 180 landholders from across the Burnett region have armed themselves with the tools and knowledge to help tackle the region's wild dog problem at predator control workshops held in Gayndah and Gin Gin last week.

The workshops, hosted by AgForce and Biosecurity Queensland, with the support of local government, aimed to ramp up the fight against feral pests, in particular wild dogs, which continue to have a devastating impact on the region's agricultural industries, economy and native flora and fauna.

AgForce State Councillor and local cattle producer, Ivan Naggs, said the wild dog problem in the region had more than doubled in the past five years.

"We are personally losing between two to three stud calves a year to wild dogs and I would say most producers are losing at least five per cent of their stock. This is simply not acceptable," Mr Naggs said.

"If agricultural production is to increase by 20 per cent, we need to get these pests under control."

Mr Naggs, who is chair of the Invasive Plants and Animals Committee and a member of the National Wild Dog Management Advisory Group said the impact of wild dogs went beyond the bottom line and was a traumatic and emotional issue for many landholders. He said the solution needed to be collective, all-in control.

"You can't have one neighbour saying they are not affected and not do anything, we all have to get behind this and we all have to play a part."

Senior Wild Dog Officer, Biosecurity Queensland, Clynton Spencer, said the wild dog problem needed urgent action to encourage all landholders to work together.

"Wild dogs can be hugely destructive to native animals and to stock," Mr Spencer said.

"The most important part of this fight is to get neighbours talking with each other about the problems they are facing from wild dogs and the actions they are taking.

"Effective pest management won't work unless we are all working together across the landscape - pest management is one in, all in."

Mr Spencer said landholders were best placed to directly control wild dogs but they need to be smart and strategic about their control approach.

"There are a number of control techniques including baiting, trapping, fencing and shooting, but the only silver bullet is you, the landholder, working with your neighbours in a combined control and management effort everywhere and all the time," he said.

"We need all the tools on the ground at the same time, so you need to be talking and coordinating actions with your neighbours."

A number of landholders at the workshops with properties in the region said they were also having a problem with feral pigs. AgForce Projects feral animal coordinator Damien Ferguson said one feral pig can cost up to \$400 in lost grain a year. Mr Ferguson said this was a clear indicator that the cost of not doing anything far outweighed the cost of control.

Further key speakers included Phillip Sutherland, Wild Dog Officer Biosecurity Queensland, Lana Harriott, School of Veterinary Science, University of Queensland and Ted Parish, AgForce Projects Industry Recovery Officer.

All attendees received a free wild dog trap, provided with the support of AWI. Further workshops are being held in Morven 2 October, Boonah 9 October, Mulgowie 10 October, Thargomindah 29 October,

Cunnamulla 31 October, Wyandra 1 November and Inglewood 7 November. For more information or to register for a workshop visit www.agforceprojects.org.au or call 3238 6048.

Photo caption: Senior Wild Dog Officer, Biosecurity Queensland, Clynton Spencer conducting a wild dog trapping demonstration.

Media contact: AgForce Projects communications officer Madeline Cooper (07) 3238 6060 or 0433 423 188.