



from the

PRESIDENT'S DESK



WILD DOG ATTACKS – TRUTH VS FICTION

IN THE current debate about wild dog control the true facts are often ignored, especially by those individuals and organisations who have no direct experience or first hand knowledge in dealing with this dangerous and resource sapping problem.

Wild dogs are predators that prey on livestock, horses, and pets. They are vicious, brutal in their attacks, and their population has exploded resulting in an imbalance which needs to be corrected.

The fact is that the wild dog's only predators are human beings. Natural selection in the wild does not control wild dog populations, as there are no animal rivals and crossbreeding with domestic dogs has resulted in an animal with an aggressive nature, that produce two annual litters, instead of only one with pure bred dingoes.

Due to the vast remoteness of Western Australia, the burden and responsibility of wild dog population control is given to pastoralists—a necessary responsibility that is under fire by some who perhaps do not realize the seriousness of the problem.

Hard and fast opposition to wild dog control demonstrates a lack of compassion for farmers, domestic livestock, pets and, ironically, wildlife.

Perhaps pastoralists should start carrying cameras when checking livestock and capture the image of wild dogs maiming and terrorizing animals, especially cows during calving, or the remains of a sheep flock, some with their entrails dragging. Releasing these images to the public may prove more enlightening and educational for those who insist that these animals should be protected.

The fact is that each year pastoralists in Western Australia lose livestock worth thousands of dollars due to wild dog attacks. While the financial loss of a single animal may be anywhere from \$100 to \$500, the simple truth is that rarely is just one animal attacked, and even more rarely is there just one incident.

One station in the Kimberly reported that it had lost on average 2-3 head of cattle per day from wild dog attacks, resulting in a loss of over \$350,000 annually. Another family owned pastoral station has lost over 2000 goats and 3000 sheep to wild dogs, and is facing financial ruin. Other station owners have been unable to sell their properties, being told that the property is worthless due to the wild dog problem.

Even though most farmers in WA are receiving good prices for livestock, the losses incurred through wild dog attacks can be crippling, especially when combined with high input costs and the ever persistent threat of drought.

The very people who provide food for human consumption – pastoralists and farmers—are the ones forced to carry the burden and become the targets of criticism regarding wild dog population control. Pastoralists have to do the dirty work while the well meaning couch critics implement a self-righteous stand from the comforts of their dwellings, and eat the food produced by the very people they continue to criticise and degrade.

Producers work the land and understand the balance of life and its necessity to the natural and civilized world. They should not be criticised for their actions by those who refuse to acknowledge where their food comes from, and offer no solution to the devastating problem of wild dogs.

Rob Gillam

THE PGA REPRESENTS THE INTERESTS OF FARMERS AND PASTORALISTS FROM ALL AGRICULTURAL AREAS OF WA, FROM ESPERANCE TO THE KIMBERLEY. PGA MEMBERS ARE MAJOR PRODUCERS OF AGRICULTURAL EXPORT COMMODITIES – INCLUDING GRAIN, BEEF, SHEEP AND WOOL – AND BELIEVE IN FREE TRADE, OPEN MARKETS, PROPERTY RIGHTS AND PRIVATE ENTERPRISE.

Join us on **FACEBOOK** – go to the **PGA website**

Give us your feedback – **EMAIL: pga@pgaofwa.org.au**

PHONE: 08-9479 4599

www.pgaofwa.org.au



1349113