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Wild Dog and Fox Control

Many wool growing areas of Australia are experiencing severe attacks by wild dogs, accounting for up to 30 per cent of stock mortalities, and leading to crippling economic losses.

Nonetheless, the continued use of sodium fluoroacetate or 1080, the most effective control method for wild dogs and foxes, is under some pressure from industry regulators and the community. This is because the symptoms of poisoning by 1080 can appear distressing and the compound can be toxic to some non-target species.

Australian Wool Innovation (AWI) is taking an active role in the current review of 1080, by making strong representations on behalf of Australian woolgrowers that the toxin should not be banned without a viable replacement being available. Wild dogs and foxes have serious impacts on both livestock industries and our native fauna, and effective management tools are required to address this. However, it is also clear that better long-term solutions are required.

AWI's response has been to fund a three-year, \$3.2 million project aimed at developing the next generation of wild dog and fox control technologies, before the use of 1080 is potentially restricted, as has been the case in the United States.

Project Progress

By working together with the Pest Animal Control Cooperative Research Centre (CRC), AWI is endeavouring to provide the protection required by woolgrowers to prevent expensive stock losses from wild dogs and foxes, while at the same time addressing community concerns over chemical use and animal welfare.



The project is based on the Achilles Heel approach. Scientists looked for unique characteristics that are specific to the physiology of dogs and foxes, then developed compounds to target those characters. The result has been three compounds or combinations that potentially offer highly specific and humane control of canid species.

Project Outcomes

If the project is successful, it will ensure sheep producers have ongoing access to an effective and humane method of wild dog and fox control. In addition, there is an opportunity for all Australian woolgrowers to benefit from potential earnings as a result of the export of a successful product to large overseas markets, bringing a significant return on woolgrowers' investments.

at a glance...

- Up to 30% of stock losses are caused by wild dog attacks in some areas of Australia.
- The Wild Dog Control Program aims to develop additional viable wild dog and fox control technologies before any restrictions are proposed for the use of 1080.
- A successful product could potentially be exported to large overseas markets, resulting in a significant return on woolgrowers' investments.

For more information

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