



7 January 2020

Senate Environment and Communications References Committee  
Department of the Senate  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Via email: [ec.sen@aph.gov.au](mailto:ec.sen@aph.gov.au)

To whom it may concern,

**Re. Inquiry into the impacts of feral deer, pigs and goats in Australia, response to questions on notice**

Please find attached a response from the National Farmers' Federation to the written questions on notice from Senator Urquhart, relating to the committee's inquiry into the impacts of feral deer, pigs and goats in Australia.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input to this important inquiry. Should you require any further information in relation to this letter please contact Adrienne Ryan, NFF General Manager Rural Affairs

Yours sincerely,

**PRUDENCE GORDON**  
A/g Chief Executive Officer

Encl.

## Attachment

## NFF response to questions on notice

1. **On 8 November 2019 the Minister for Agriculture announced the establishment of a National Feral Pig Coordinator, with Commonwealth funding of \$1.4 million over the next three and a half years to support this role. The NFF stated in its response to this announcement that it looks forward to 'working with the Coordinator to develop a national plan for feral pig control'.**

- a. **What form will a new national plan for feral pig control take?**

The NFF understands that Australian Pork Limited has been contracted to deliver the \$1.4 million national feral pig coordinator project, and that the coordinator will be responsible for overseeing development of a national feral pig control plan, in consultation with government, industry, the research sector, environment and community stakeholders and others as required. The NFF and a number of its member organisations will be engaged in this process.

It is expected that development of the national plan will have regard to existing feral pig control plans and initiatives at a government, industry, regional and local level, as well as relevant work being undertaken by research organisations. The national feral pig control plan would enable improved coordination, focus and effectiveness of these feral pig control efforts.

The NFF understands the national feral pig control plan will be modelled on the successful National Wild Dog Action Plan (NWDAP), which has been in place since 2014. The NWDAP was an industry-driven initiative, developed through government/industry collaboration, and its implementation is supported by a National Wild Dog Management Coordinator.

The NWDAP aims to promote and support community-driven action for landscape-scale wild dog management by focusing on leadership and governance; awareness and capacity building; control tools and methods; and monitoring, evaluation and reporting. Further information on the NWDAP is available at [www.pestsmart.org.au/national-wild-dog-action-plan/](http://www.pestsmart.org.au/national-wild-dog-action-plan/).

- b. **How will any new national plan for feral pig control interact with the Threat Abatement Plan (TAP) for feral pigs currently in place under the EPBC Act?**

The NFF expects the Threat Abatement Plan (TAP) for feral pigs will be an important consideration in the development of the national feral pig control plan, and that the interaction between the TAP and the feral pig control plan would be determined through this process.

- c. **What is the NFF's view more broadly on the effectiveness of the current TAP for feral pigs?**

The NFF understands that under the *Environment Protection Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*, implementation of TAPs is driven by the Australian Government, including by seeking cooperation from affected state and territory governments where the TAP applies outside of areas under Australian Government control and responsibility.

The NFF is not in a position to comment specifically on the effectiveness of the current TAP for feral pigs. For a Threat Abatement Plan (TAP) to be effective, it must be well resourced. It is not clear to the NFF what resourcing has been committed to actions detailed in the TAP, and whether the TAP is being actively implemented.

**2. What other actions does the NFF consider are necessary to address the potential threat of feral pigs in Australia becoming infected with African swine fever? In particular, do governments need to commit funds towards immediate population culling of feral pigs? What quantum of funding would be needed to achieve meaningful results?**

Addressing the potential threat of feral pigs in Australia becoming infected with African swine fever (ASF) relies primarily on preventing ASF from entering Australia. The NFF supports the additional biosecurity measures put in place at the border and pre-border to minimise the risk of an ASF incursion, and believes that these enhanced measures should be maintained.

Controlling feral pig populations is also an important mechanism to minimise the risk of ASF impacting domestic pig populations should it enter Australia. Importantly, controlling feral pig populations will also minimise the significant negative impact that this pest species is already having on agricultural production and the natural environment.

The NFF supports increased government investment in feral pig control activities. The national feral pig coordinator will have responsibility for ascertaining what actions and investment are required at a national level to achieve a meaningful reduction in feral pig populations, including through the development of the national feral pig control plan. Importantly, achieving effective feral pig population control will require up to date national and region-specific baseline data on the distribution and density of feral pig populations, landscape use and effective control methods.

**3. Please provide information on any other relevant developments you believe the committee should be aware of since providing your submission.**

NA