A close-up photograph of a fox's face, showing its orange-brown fur, white muzzle, and sharp eyes. The fox is looking directly at the camera. The image is partially obscured by a dark grey banner on the right side.

## Australia's pest animals and their role as weed dispersers

**Jason Wishart**  
Animal Control Technologies  
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# Origins of the problem

acta

- Many species have been introduced
- Most since European settlement
- Nearly 650 to date
- Some were deliberate
- Some were accidental
- Many failed BUT some did prosper
- ~ 73 have established wild populations
- The threat of new incursions is real!!



# Diseases

acta

***Reservoirs for diseases that can impact humans, wildlife and stock.***

- Already here
  - Brucellosis
  - Leptospirosis
  - Hydatid
- Potential exotic diseases
  - Rabies
  - Foot and mouth
  - African swine fever





# Agriculture

acta

- Cost \$720 million to \$1 billion p.a.
- Lost production and management costs
- Also cause social impacts
- Impact various production systems
- Destroy and consume crops
- Prey on, and maim, stock
- Compete directly for resources



# Environmental

acta

- Caused many extinctions
- Prey on wildlife and their eggs
- Destroy habitat
- Alter vegetation structure
- Spread disease
- Compete for resources
- Damage soil structure
- Contribute to erosion
- Spread weeds





# Weed provide ideal habitat

acta





# Weeds provide food

acta





# Pest animals spread weeds

acta





# Pests animals modify habitat

acta



Overgrazing



Ground rooting



Wallowing



Game trails

# Control techniques

acta

- Poison baiting (aerial and ground)
- Trapping
- Shooting (aerial and ground)
- Harbour removal/destruction
- Fencing
- Biocontrol





# Historical management

acta

- Ad hoc and reactive to damage
- Often 1 control technique used
- Timing of control is poor
- Often undertaken a small-scale
- Large focus on numbers killed
- Very little monitoring.

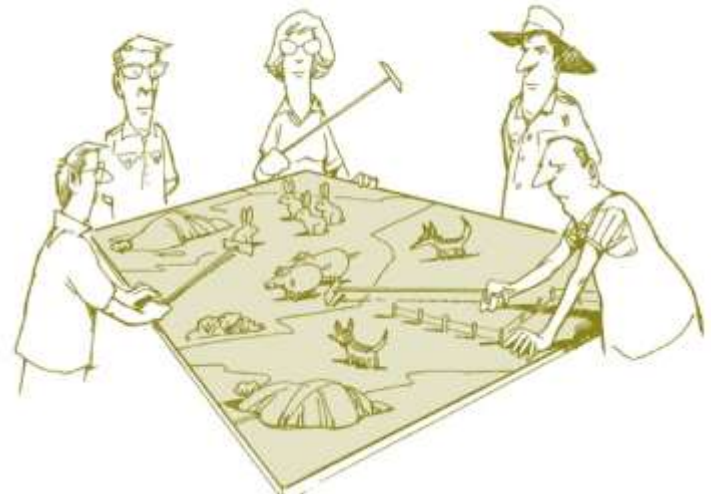


# Modern management

acta

## *Overall aim to reduce damage*

- **Define the problem**
  - lamb predation
- **Set clear measurable objectives**
  - Increased lamb marking %.
- **Develop a plan**
  - Use several control techniques
  - Implement in strategic order
- **Work with neighbours**
- **Implement, monitor and refine**





# Use several techniques

acta

- One technique never 100%
- Reinvasion and population recovery
- Choose techniques that suit
- Implement when they work best
- Eradication rarely possible
- Apply ongoing management pressure



# Monitoring and evaluation

acta

*Critical to confirm objectives are met*

- **Operational monitoring**
  - What was done?
  - When and where?
  - How much \$\$
- **Performance monitoring**
  - Only collect what you need
  - Density/damage related
  - Time and cost efficient

Refine program if needed







# Thanks

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