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Mark Williams
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Dear Mark

Livestock SA recently conducted a survey of members regarding fox issues and farming. Members were invited to describe their experiences with foxes including the impact foxes have on their farming operations, how well foxes are controlled in their district, who should be responsible for fox control and how effective is that control.

There were 46 respondents to the survey with 40 seeing foxes on their properties often. When asked about the impact on their property 42 responded saying there was some impact; of these 15% said the impact was huge. In some cases the losses in sheep flocks were severe and put considerable pressure on cash-flows.

Very few respondents considered fox control was effective in their district. The responses outline some of the issues relating to control and the consequences of these issues. The majority believed that control should be the responsibility of the land owner; including the crown. About 25% of respondents include the use of guard dogs or alpacas in an attempt to reduce losses in young lambs. Obviously there are problems with the current legislation because managers of public land and some land owners do not see the control of foxes a high priority on the land they have responsibility for. Also with the continued increase in lifestyle blocks in certain areas there is the situation where many landholders are unaware of their responsibilities under the Act.

Livestock SA strongly believe the NRM Boards should take a greater role in advising and assisting landowners in the control of foxes. They should be responsible directly for the control of foxes on public land, mainly through baiting. In closer settled areas, where baiting is difficult or impossible, NRM Boards could undertake research into improved fumigation techniques as an alternative practice.

Livestock SA submits the attached survey form and contained comments as the substantial part of our submission to the review of government fox policy in South Australia.

Yours sincerely

Geoff Power
President Livestock SA