



**The Hon. David Littleproud MP**  
**Minister for Agriculture, Drought and**  
**Emergency Management**  
**Deputy Leader of the Nationals**

Media Release

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**\$10m to help farmers manage pests and weeds in drought**

- **33 local councils to share in \$10 million under Round 2 of the Communities Combating Pest and Weed Impacts During Drought Program.**
- **The program – an election commitment – assists communities and farmers manage pest animals and weeds at a time when they are least able to do so.**
- **It aims to reduce the detrimental economic, social and environmental effects associated with pest animals and weeds during drought.**

More Australian Government support is on the way for drought-affected farmers and communities battling weeds and pest animals.

Agriculture Minister David Littleproud said 33 councils, individually or as part of a consortium, will share in \$10 million to help local farmers and landholders control scourges like rabbits, wild dogs and feral pigs along with some of our most detrimental weeds such as prickly acacia, African boxthorn and serrated tussock.

“Managing pests and weeds is a significant cost at the best of times for farmers and even more of an impost for those in the grips of the drought,” Minister Littleproud said.

“The capacity of these farmers to manage pests and weeds during drought is reduced because they are dealing with other challenges such as feeding livestock and keeping their farm businesses running.

“Weeds compete with fodder and native plants. Rabbits, deer, wild dogs and feral pigs wreak havoc, undermining drought management activities and recovery efforts, and can threaten both livestock and native animals.

“Thankfully, many regions are on the road to recovery on the back of fantastic recent rains, but we must continue backing these communities to help them get through to the other side.

“The Australian Government set up the *Communities Combating Pest and Weed Impacts During Drought Program* to ensure our drought-hit regions have the resources to manage these scourges at a time when they are least able to do so.

“This funding is used by local councils to support farmers and land managers, to reduce the impacts of pest animals and weeds on agriculture and the local environment and to stimulate local economies and employment.”

23 projects will be funded under Round 2 of the Program.

This will see efforts to remove tropical soda apple from the Macleay Valley in New South Wales and to reduce blackberry impacts in the Collie, Dardanup, Donnybrook-Balingup shires in Western Australia, along with exclusion fencing for rural communities around Wangaratta in Victoria to keep out wild dogs, deer, foxes and rabbits.

For more details about the Program visit [www.agriculture.gov.au/ag-farm-food/drought/assistance/pest-management](http://www.agriculture.gov.au/ag-farm-food/drought/assistance/pest-management)

**Fast Facts:**

- **Nationally, the annual cost of established vertebrate pest animals is about \$800m and over \$4 billion for weeds in production losses and control activities.**
- **A 2016 survey undertaken by ABARES found that agricultural businesses spend an average of \$7,023 yearly on pest animal management activities and an average of \$17,917 yearly on weed management activities.**
- **Round 1 of the Program saw \$15m delivered in 2018-19 for 48 pest and weed management and wild dog exclusion fencing projects in drought-affected areas.**

**Media contact:** Douglas Ferguson 0455 448 985