

“What will the damage to the unique New Zealand environment be?”



PEST ANIMALS INCLUDE:

DEER, GOATS, PIGS, WALLABIES, RABBITS, TURKEY, CANADA GEESE.

Rural private landowners who can no longer effectively manage pest animals on their land say:

- Can't wait for a pest controller. Often work is very short notice as it requires addressing problem animals when they turn up and cause damage.
- The pigs have run away by the time I have contacted a pest control company and paid them to come to my farm.
- When 25 deer are destroying crops at 10pm at night contacting a pest control company and expecting them to travel out ASAP is not a feasible option.
- When the pigs turn up you need to act immediately.
- Mobs of pigs are usually within 100 metres of bush or forest which they can escape to – speed is of the essence to control them. Speed means big capacity magazines and fast shooting.
- Wild animals don't work to a structured timeframe so normally immediate action is the best way to maximize results.
- Mob of goats destroyed a hectare of maize before were culled.
- Mob 32 goats – bolt action culled three, semi automatic culled 27, two got away.
- Pigs – bolt action culled one, semi-automatic culled 15.
- Cull up to 5 fallow deer with a semi-auto, are lucky to get 2 with a bolt action.
- Pigs rush onto the paddocks, rooting up the pasture and mis-mothering ewes and lambs sometimes eating new born lambs alive.
- Semis enabling culling a lot of rabbits from a long distance before they take flight. Had been successful in stabilising and making visible reductions in the observed rabbit population. Bolt action is slower, the cull rate is halved. The rabbit population is now expanding again.
- Seen a steady increase in the number of animals damaging farm pasture and crops in many areas.
- Used to see 100 goats – now give up counting after 1000.
- In the previous year culled 1000 goats and 2 to 3 thousand turkeys. This year – none.

SEMI-AUTOMATIC FIREARMS

WHY RURAL PRIVATE LAND OWNERS (AND NZ INC.) NEED THESE EFFECTIVE, EFFICIENT HUMANE TOOLS FOR PEST MANAGEMENT

In order to effectively control pest animals farmers need to be able to react quickly and cull as many as possible before the animals take flight and escape. Quick action also reduces the damage to crops, pasture and the environment (public and private land).

Quick action results in more effective and efficient results at a much lower cost to NZ Inc as well as to private land owners. Shooting from longer range with centrefire semi-automatic rifles ensures more animals can be culled before the animals disperse. Rapid shots in these situations ensure the animals are dispatched as humanely as possible. Reliance on contracted Pest Control Operators is often not an option due to availability, speed of attendance and cost.

Semi-automatics, pump and lever action rifles used by land owners and recreational hunters play a big part in controlling pests. Much of this largely unacknowledged contribution to the NZ environment and economy will cease due to the loss of the use of the most effective tools available for the job. Evidence indicates that pest numbers will begin rising again.

The alternative is to use paid pest controllers. Note that this option is only a partial solution, as it cannot provide an 'emergency response' due to not being 'on the spot' when pests unexpectedly arrive – goats or pigs entering a property from adjacent bush and scrub areas.

What will the cost to the New Zealand taxpayer be to partially replace the work of these volunteers?

What will the damage to the unique New Zealand environment be?

For further information, please contact:
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THE COST AND DAMAGE TO NEW ZEALAND INC. BY PEST ANIMALS

SHOOTING IS THE MOST HUMANE METHOD OF PEST DESTRUCTION AND ONE OF THE MOST EFFECTIVE METHODS AVAILABLE FOR PRIVATE LANDOWNERS.

New Zealand's native plants are particularly vulnerable to damage from browsing.

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Pest Information sourced from DOC and Regional Councils

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WALLABIES

- Eat native and exotic seedlings, preventing regenerating native bush and damaging plantation forests.
- Compete with livestock for pasture
- Reduce the forest understorey with possible impacts on water quality.
- They can damage tall tussock grasslands, which if bare ground becomes exposed, is at a higher risk of soil erosion.

PIGS

- Pose a serious threat to biodiversity by eating seedlings and root systems, native insects and ground nesting birds and their young.
- Pigs contribute to erosion through rooting, trampling, compaction and wallowing.
- A nuisance to agriculture because of their destructive feeding habits, often living in groups and overturning large areas of pasture in search of food.
- Pigs will kill new-born lambs and are a known vector of the disease Bovine Tb.

GOATS

- Feral goats now occupy about 14% of New Zealand – about half of this on public conservation land.
- Total population size is unknown but is estimated to be several hundred thousand.
- Cause two-fold damage by eating native plants and by trampling large areas of vegetation and compactable soils.
- Devastate the forest understorey, and severely impact on plant biodiversity. Goats can also contribute to soil erosion.
- Damage commercial gardens, forestry seedlings, amenity plantings and lawns and property.

DEER

- Intensive browsing can remove much of the forest under-storey and strip bark from trees, impacting plant biodiversity.
- Contribute to soil erosion through intensive browsing, soil trampling, compaction and wallowing.
- A known vector of Bovine Tb, a disease which threatens the agricultural industry.
- Damage feed crops, and graze large amounts of pasture.

CANADA GEESE

- Five geese may consume the same amount of grass as one sheep and they impact on production by fouling paddocks.
- Defecation from large numbers of Canada goose is the greater threat to aquatic values introducing bacteria and nutrients into waterways.
- Competes with other waterfowl for wetland resources.