



**Adam Marshall**  
Minister for Agriculture  
Minister for Western NSW

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **GAME OVER FOR DEER IN NSW**

Farmers and private landholders will be able to better and more easily control the State's exploding feral deer population, following a regulation change announced today by Agriculture Minister Adam Marshall.

Deer currently occupy the unique 'game species' classification, meaning a special hunting licence is required to eradicate them. Under the changes anyone with a firearm licence will be able to eradicate deer on private land, so long as they have landholder's permission.

Mr Marshall said removing game status would give landholders the upper hand in dealing with surging numbers of the four-legged menace.

"The NSW deer population has exploded in recent years and these feral animals are not only causing grief for farmers battling drought – they're encroaching on urban areas and creating a hazard for motorists too," Mr Marshall said.

"As it stands, landholders are fighting these feral animals with one hand tied behind their back. It simply doesn't make sense for deer to have a semi-protected status while their population is soaring.

"Removing game status will give landholders more flexibility to manage deer and will bring its classification into line with other feral animals such as wild dogs, foxes, rabbits and pigs."

Over the last 10 years the distribution of deer across the State has increased from approximately 8 to 17 per cent.

Member for Port Macquarie Leslie Williams said the changes would come as a huge relief to members of the local community.

"In Port Macquarie and surrounding areas the deer population has become a significant issue. They're damaging farms, causing grief for motorists and encroaching on residential properties," Mrs Williams said.

"I spoke in Parliament in May on the need for something to be done about the deer and our community has been calling for this change. I'm glad the NSW Government has listened and will empower landholders to better manage deer."

The changes will be made under the *Game and Feral Animal Control Act 2002* and come into effect on 6 September 2019.

**MEDIA: Jackson Busse | 0447 949 718**