

# Taking Action

# MEPAAW-NT-03

## Learning about feral cats evasive nature

GLENRAC Inc



### Research is underway to narrow down how to effectively manage feral cats on farm.

#### The issue

There are numerous feline diseases that humans can contract and severely suffer from. These include Giardia and Toxoplasmosis, which are both protozoa parasites that will not show symptoms in cats but will greatly affect humans if contracted. These diseases are not restricted to feral cats but are also carried in domesticated pets. Feral cat sightings have been increasing in the GLENRAC area and it has been noted that education of the risks carried by these animals needs to be delivered along with effective monitoring and control tactics.

#### The solution

The Ferals in Focus information event was held on the 11<sup>th</sup> of May 2019 at the Dundee Hall, a central location for local pest management groups. Dr. Bronwyn Fancourt presented her fascinating findings on feral cat behaviour and adequate control methods for producer groups as well as up and coming resources available for monitoring and management. An abundance of print information was available for producers to take home for further learning and a cat trap was on display for demonstration of how to use, these are also available to borrow from the GLENRAC office.

#### The impact

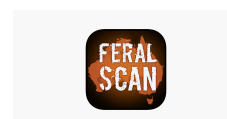
Dr. Fancourt's research has shown that dogs, or dingos, are not an effective method for deterring felines from an area nor to control their population numbers. She has also found that baits used to control dog numbers are not very effective for cats; even if they are interested in the bait, the likelihood of it being ingested within the desired time frame is low. Therefore the most effective form of control is to have a cat-detecting dog on hand or trapping. Cat bait is in the works for approval to use in NSW. Producers were shown how to use the Feral Scan app to record sightings, damage and control measures of feral cats in their area. Knowledge of feral cats increased from less than 30% of attendees with a lot of knowledge to over 80%. Of the 29 attendees 14% had a lot of confidence to undertake necessary control methods before the event, which increased to 82% after the event.



### Key facts

- Destruction of native wildlife populations is not the only damage caused by feral cats.
- Current available baits are not an effective method of control for feral cats.
- Trapping and a cat-detecting dog are the most effective methods for feral cat termination presently.

### Project Partners



The Local Landcare Coordinator Initiative Program that enables the promotion of these case studies on the Gateway, is funded by the NSW Government and is supported through the partnership of Local Land Services and Landcare NSW

