



TIAR Media Release



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ATTENTION: Chiefs of Staff, News Directors

Browsing wildlife eating into farmers' profits

Tasmania's browsing wildlife is capable of decimating agricultural pastures and could be affecting the profit margins of graziers, new research has found.

An assessment of the impact of browsing damage to Tasmanian pastures has been undertaken by the Natural Resource Management research group at the Tasmanian Institute of Agricultural Research (TIAR) as part of the joint State-Federal *Alternatives to 1080* program. The program is designed to explore alternatives to 1080 poison to control browsing wildlife.

Results from six months of monitoring sites in Tasmania's North-West, North-East and Midlands suggest that wildlife browsing can significantly reduce pasture production when within 10m of substantial vegetation.

In some cases, wildlife are effectively competing with livestock for available pasture.

The study gives the first insight into the amount of pasture consumed by browsing wildlife and the economic impact to producers.

Depending on the research site, spotlight monitoring has shown the presence of both small and large numbers of browsing animals, in particular the Tasmanian pademelon (*Thylogale billardierii*), Bennett's wallaby (*Macropus*

rufogriseus), and brushtail possum (*Trichosurus vulpecula*). These species primarily inhabit forest, scrubland and adjacent grazing land.

A research briefing and discussion of the results is taking place today at the Dept of Primary Industries and Water, Prospect, for members of the community.



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