

Submission to the Deer Management Pest Animal Review Natural Resources Commission

Far South Coast Farmers Network supports the recommendation that all species of feral deer should be changed from game animal to pest animal by removing them from the Game and Feral Animal Control ACT 2002.

At a meeting on 20 May 2016 members discussed the problems that deer are causing on their farming operations.

Recreational hunters can no longer control the numbers and members are resentful of the Law that protects the deer purely for recreational hunters without regard to the damage to agricultural incomes , the environment, hazard on roads and the threat to biodiversity.

Agriculture has always been a steady contributor to the Australia's economy and to exports and is more so now that there is a downturn in the mining sector and Australia's manufacturing industries. There has not been a better time to be in the farming sector with the free trade agreements which at last will give better access to foreign markets for Australian agricultural products.

Farmers reported that they had to reduce the numbers of beef cattle they could carry because of the competition from the deer. ██████████ said he has anywhere from 20 to 300 deer competing for pasture on a regular basis on his property ██████████. The cost is enormous. When he first bought the property he might see 5 or 6 a week now there are 100s.

Towamba Valley is also a valuable farming area with beef sheep and fruit orchards. Apart from the damage to fences and pastures deer do terrible damage to fruit and fruit trees.

The worst problems occur where there are or have been deer farms. There needs to be more accountability on those who farm deer .

The areas where deer are sighted as a growing problem are Kiah south of Eden, Towamba, Candelo, Brogo and Yowrie.

The controls on when deer can be shot are so restrictive and the problem is exacerbated by the fact that fallow deer are protected from 1 November to 1 March to enable the does to rear their young .

In conclusion the members of the Far South Coast Farmers Network supports the recommendation that all species of feral deer should be changed from

game animal to pest animal by removing them from the Game and Feral Animal Control ACT 2002.