

Biosecurity Strategy for Kangaroo Island

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is biosecurity?

Biosecurity is the protection of the environment, the economy and society from negative impacts associated with pests, diseases and weeds by working to prevent their spread.

2. Why do we need a biosecurity strategy?

Kangaroo Island is a precious place and has been protected from the arrival of many pests and diseases due to our isolation (the water gap) and measures that have been put in place to protect the island. Policies have been in place since 2005 aimed at preventing new pests and diseases arriving and establishing on the island. It is now time to review and renew these to make them current and relevant. The cost of pests and disease to biodiversity and agriculture is significant and prevention is better (and cheaper) than cure.

3. What are some of the factors that are influencing our pest and disease status?

The risk of pest and disease incursion is affected by the increasing movement of people and goods onto Kangaroo Island, the expanding tourism sector, and environmental factors such as changes in land use and climate change.

4. What are some of the key pest and disease risks to Kangaroo Island?

There are a range of pests and diseases that we don't have here that would have an impact on the environment, agriculture and our way of life such as rabbits, foxes, weeds like broom rape and innocent weed, marine pests including European Fan worms and sea squirts and insects like fire ants, hive beetle and European wasps.

5. What things have been considered in developing this strategy?

Firstly, there is no such thing as zero risk – anything that arrives here potentially poses a risk. Consideration has also been given to utilising the limited resources we have to get best value in the protection of Kangaroo Island. Simply put, we need to get the best bang for our buck. We also need to be conscious that there is legislation that protects us but that this doesn't cover all of the threats. We need to ensure that there are things that we don't want on Kangaroo Island or that have arrived and we need to remove or manage them in order to reduce the impact on Kangaroo Island. We have also considered the fact that some of the environments and industries we are protecting are unique to Kangaroo Island, such as the disease and pest free honey bee industry and the pristine waters that don't have marine pests like European fan worms.



6. What approach is being used?

A biosecurity system works best when it follows a few fundamentals. These include: prevention is better than cure; a risk based approach to decision making; responsibility is shared by the whole community and everyone makes an effort to protect Kangaroo Island; and that when things go wrong we are ready to respond to eliminate the risk as quickly as possible.

7. What is my role as a resident of Kangaroo Island?

We would like everyone to be aware of what shouldn't be brought to Kangaroo Island (e.g. honey, ferrets, potatoes for planting, soil or manure that may carry seed), keep a look out for things that shouldn't be here and report them immediately (like rabbits and European wasps) and to help in the efforts to eradicate (if newly arrived and not widely spread) and contain pests that have established themselves (like weeds such as onion weed and boxthorn).

8. Why don't we use more chemical controls to get rid of the weeds and feral animals like cats?

Whilst there is a need for the use of chemicals and poisons we also need to ensure we use the most appropriate ones at the right concentration and in a targeted way (with appropriate follow-up). In the case of feral animals, care needs to be taken to ensure they are used in a safe manner so as to minimise the impact on off-target species and be as humane as possible. Working with natural systems is often more effective and less expensive in the long run and we therefore need to explore holistic management practices that reduce the need for intervention.

9. What is my role as a farmer?

Farmers can help by ensuring that goods from the mainland are free of things that could bring new pests and diseases, like soil on used farm machinery or by ensuring fodder is free of weed seeds and quarantining new stock. Managing existing weed and feral pests, regularly checking stock and paddocks, and reporting unusual weeds or signs of disease are all important. Reducing the cost of farming and increasing production is a key outcome of this strategy.

10. What is my role as a visitor to Kangaroo Island?

Being aware of the items you can't bring to Kangaroo Island and ensuring that you follow any warning signage such as the phytophthora hygiene requirements in national parks.

11. Where can I get more information about biosecurity and Kangaroo Island?

[The Natural Resources website](#) is a great place to start.



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