



KANGAROO MYTHS:

Excuses for the mass slaughter
of Australia's iconic kangaroos



© All rights reserved. Robyn Opie Parnell.

MYTH: Kangaroos are farmed



- Kangaroos are wild animals hunted at night in rural locations.
- Kangaroos are victims of the world's largest slaughter of land-based wildlife.
- Shooting kangaroos in the wild is cheap. There are no expenses associated with feeding or caring for kangaroos. Plus, joey mortality is too high (73%) and kangaroos take too long to grow to a profitable size.

<https://www.kangaroosatrisk.net/2-biology-population-ecology.html>

<https://www.kangaroosatrisk.org/biology.html>

MYTH: Kangaroos are overabundant

Definition: too [abundant](#); excessive (Collins Dictionary)

No universally accepted scientific definition for overabundant is available.

Overabundant is entirely subjective, and boils down to this: “If I don’t like it, it’s an overabundant pest”.

CJA Bradshaw, Global Ecology, Flinders University



“An overabundant native vertebrate species was defined operationally as one which had, in the last decade, been the subject of a management action taken to reduce its numbers or its impact... These species (Western Grey Kangaroo, Eastern Grey Kangaroo, Red Kangaroo) and the Euro are called overabundant because they are considered to compete for pasture intended for stock...”

Overabundant native vertebrates in New South Wales: characterising populations, gauging perceptions and developing an ethical management framework (Lunney et al, 2007)



No "overabundant" kangaroos.
No kangaroo habitat = no kangaroos.



MYTH: Kangaroos are abundant enough to kill in the millions each year



Australian Governments often quote *Kangaroo management options IN THE MURRAY-DARLING BASIN* (Hacker et al, 2004) to justify their current commercial kangaroo management plans.

Here's what Hacker et al (2004) concluded:

“any option resulting in an average long-term density of less than 10/sq km should be rejected since in all such cases the minimum density is likely to fall below the critical level.”

Kangaroo Management Options

IN THE MURRAY-DARLING BASIN

Ron Hacker, Steve McLeod, John Druhan, Brigitte Tenhumberg & Udai Pradhan



Red Kangaroos

According to *Kangaroo management options IN THE MURRAY-DARLING BASIN* (Hacker et al, 2004), red kangaroos shouldn't be killed in –

- 20 out of 21 regions in Queensland
- 15 out of 16 regions in New South Wales
- 13 out of 13 regions in South Australia
- 3 out of 3 regions in Western Australia
- Red kangaroos are at risk of extinction in Victoria

[2021 Quota Submission for Commercially Harvested Macropods in Queensland](#)

[2021 Quota Report New South Wales Commercial Kangaroo Harvest Management Plan 2017–2021](#)

[2021 Quota Report Commercial Kangaroo Harvest South Australia](#)

[2021 Commercial Kangaroo Harvest Quota Submission for Western Australia](#)

[Kangaroo harvest quotas for Victoria, 2021](#)



Western Grey Kangaroos

According to *Kangaroo management options IN THE MURRAY-DARLING BASIN* (Hacker et al, 2004), western grey kangaroos shouldn't be killed in –

- 17 out of 17 regions in South Australia
- 4 out of 4 regions in Western Australia

[2021 Quota Report Commercial Kangaroo Harvest South Australia](#)
[2021 Commercial Kangaroo Harvest Quota Submission for Western Australia](#)



Eastern Grey Kangaroos

According to *Kangaroo management options IN THE MURRAY-DARLING BASIN* (Hacker et al, 2004), eastern grey kangaroos shouldn't be killed in –

- 16 out of 21 regions in Queensland
- 1 out of 1 region in South Australia

[2021 Quota Submission for Commercially Harvested Macropods in Queensland](#)
[2021 Quota Report Commercial Kangaroo Harvest South Australia](#)

Grey Kangaroos

Eastern grey kangaroos and western grey kangaroos are grouped together in New South Wales and Victoria. Grey kangaroos shouldn't be killed in –

- 11 out of 16 regions in New South Wales
- 7 out of 8 regions in Victoria





Euro Wallaroos

Euro wallaroos shouldn't be killed in –

- 21 out of 21 regions in Queensland
- 3 out of 3 regions in New South Wales
- Population estimates are unknown in South Australia due to a lack of regular population surveys.

[2021 Quota Submission for Commercially Harvested Macropods in Queensland](#)

[2021 Quota Report New South Wales Commercial Kangaroo Harvest Management Plan 2017-2021](#)

[2021 Quota Report Commercial Kangaroo Harvest South Australia](#)

Fact:

The tammar wallaby was reintroduced to South Australia after decades of extinction. In 2019, the tammar wallaby was removed from the EPBC Act threatened species list so this species could be killed by the commercial industry.

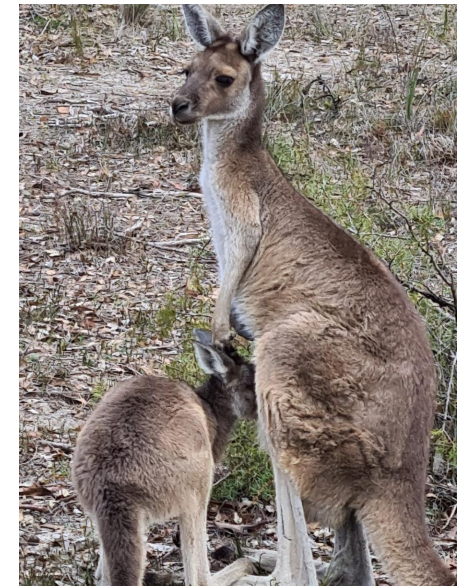


Tammar Wallabies

MYTH: Kangaroo numbers are increasing

In 2001, Queensland, New South Wales, South Australia and Western Australia estimated the number of western grey kangaroos, eastern grey kangaroos, red kangaroos and common wallaroos (the euro) in each area where kangaroos were killed for the commercial industry. According to the Australian Government, the 2001 estimated total population of the four species killed for the commercial industry was 57,430,026.

Since 2001, the commercial killing of kangaroos has expanded. For instance, kangaroos are now killed in the entire state of South Australia and two new species, the eastern grey kangaroo and tammar wallaby, were added to the number of species allowed to be commercially killed. Victoria started killing kangaroos for the commercial industry in 2014. Even though the areas in which kangaroos can be killed and the number of species allowed to be killed have increased, the 2020 estimated population of kangaroos in Queensland, New South Wales, South Australia, Western Australia and now Victoria is 33,756,463 – a decline of 41%.



Fact:

Since 2016 kangaroo populations have declined by 40% in New South Wales, 55% in Western Australia, 50% in South Australia and 36% in Queensland.



MYTH: Quotas are not set too high

The number of kangaroos allowed to be commercially killed is called the quota. Curiously, in 2001 the quota was 5,528,202 and in 2021 the quota is 4,571,271. The quota remains much the same, despite the massive decline in kangaroo numbers.

<https://www.environment.gov.au/biodiversity/wildlife-trade/natives/wild-harvest/kangaroo-wallaby-statistics/kangaroo-2001>

[2021 Quota Submission for Commercially Harvested Macropods in Queensland](#)[2021 Quota Report New South Wales Commercial Kangaroo Harvest Management Plan 2017–2021](#)

[2021 Quota Report Commercial Kangaroo Harvest South Australia](#)

[2021 Commercial Kangaroo Harvest Quota Submission for Western Australia](#)

[Kangaroo harvest quotas for Victoria, 2021](#)



DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING, INDUSTRY & ENVIRONMENT

2021 Quota Report

New South Wales Commercial Kangaroo Harvest
Management Plan 2017–2021



MYTH: Kangaroo numbers have increased since European settlement

- John Auty's research, published in *Australian Mammalogy* in 2004, concludes that Australia's kangaroo population was probably in the order of 100 to 200 million at the time of European settlement.
- The estimate of 100 to 200 million is widely quoted in scientific research and books, meaning that this figure is accepted by the scientific community.
- As of 2020, the estimated number of abundant kangaroos in Australia was approximately 33 million.

[Red plague, grey plague: the kangaroo myths and legends \(John Auty, 2004\)](#)



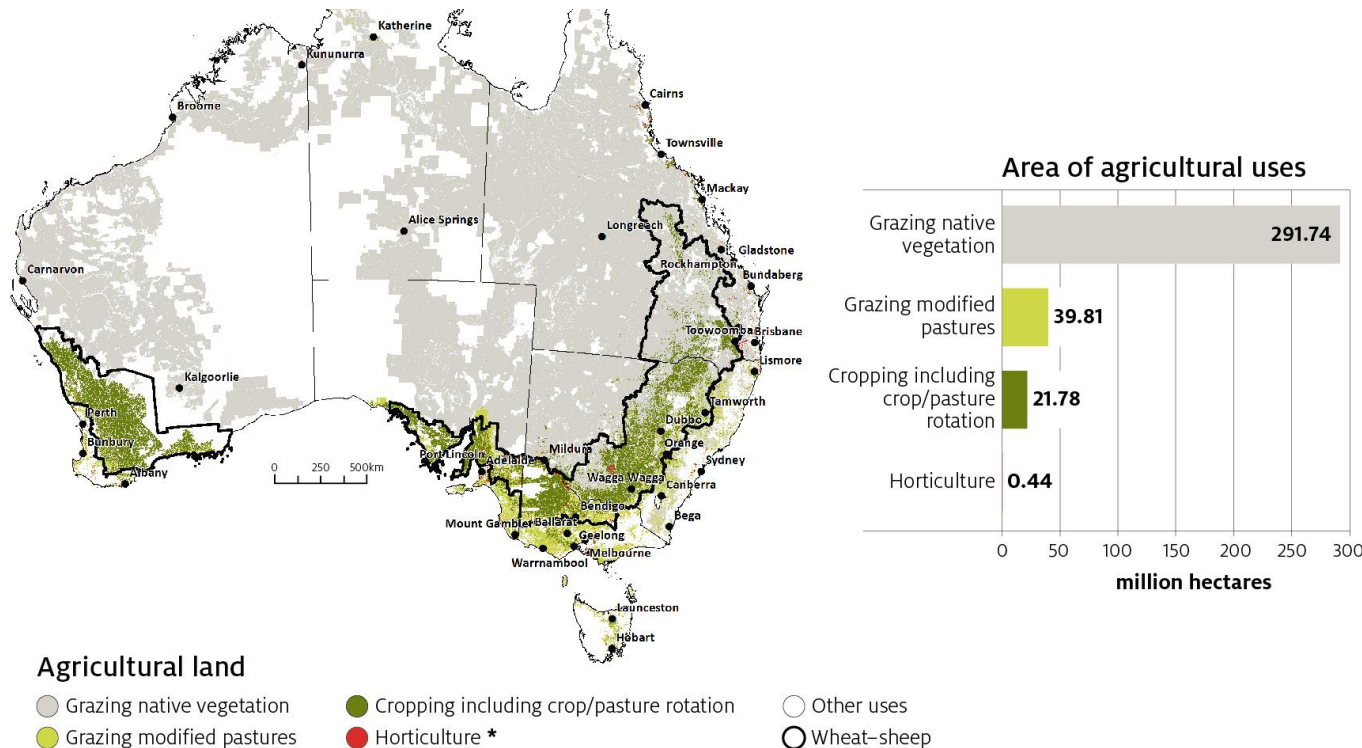
Fact:

In the Australian Capital Territory (ACT), the kangaroo population has reduced by more than 56% since European settlement. In Tasmania, the kangaroo population is at 10% of pre-European settlement numbers.



<https://theconversation.com/factcheck-are-kangaroos-at-risk-37757>
<https://www.kangaroosatrisk.net/4-how-many-kangaroos.html>

MYTH: Kangaroos need to be killed



European agriculture practices transformed the landscape. The transformation caused kangaroos to come into conflict with agricultural enterprises, leading to controls on kangaroo numbers.

[The Perils of Being Populous: Control and Conservation of Abundant Kangaroo Species \(Croft, D.B.; Witte, I. 2021\)](#)



IGNORED

The Kangaroo Industry has created an incentivised increase in kangaroo control due to a commercial driver, resulting in an unacceptable risk to the sustainability of kangaroo populations.

Source: Victorian Kangaroo Pet Food Trial Evaluation Report



Commercialising kangaroo control has highlighted key risks associated with introducing a financial incentive into the management of kangaroos. Numbers of kangaroos approved for control have risen sharply - by more than 260%.

Source: Victorian Kangaroo Pet Food Trial Evaluation Report

In Queensland and New South Wales, more than 80% of land is used for grazing livestock and agriculture. Queensland and New South Wales also have the highest number of kangaroos.

MYTH: The killing of millions of kangaroos every year is sustainable



km. Although the critical minimum density is not clearly defined, populations below 2/sq km would generally be considered at risk of extinction. On

© Copyright Murray-Darling Basin Commission, NSW Agriculture 2004

Red kangaroo populations scientifically considered at risk of extinction are commercially killed in –

- 7 out of 17 regions in Queensland
- 6 out of 9 regions in New South Wales
- 6 out of 11 regions in South Australia
- 3 out of 3 regions in Western Australia



Eastern grey kangaroo populations scientifically considered at risk of extinction are commercially killed in 10 out of 19 regions in Queensland.

Eastern grey kangaroos and western grey kangaroos are grouped together in New South Wales and Victoria. Grey kangaroo populations scientifically considered at risk of extinction are commercially killed in –

- 3 out of 14 regions in New South Wales**
- 3 out of 7 regions in Victoria.**



Western grey kangaroo populations scientifically considered at risk of extinction are commercially killed in –

- **6 out of 14 regions in South Australia**
- **3 out of 3 regions in Western Australia.**

Euro wallaroo populations scientifically considered at risk of extinction are commercially killed in 18 out of 20 regions in Queensland.

New South Wales and South Australia only survey wallaroo populations every three years, so current populations are unknown.



Unsustainable Killing

In the Mallee of Victoria, the government estimates 1,000 eastern grey kangaroos and allows 1,110 to be commercially killed.

In the Mallee of South Australia, the government estimates 5,463 red kangaroos and allows 1,000 to be commercially killed.

In the Central East of Queensland, the government estimates 74,800 wallaroos and allows 11,200 to be commercially killed.

Grey kangaroos in Bourke, New South Wales, declined by 77% since 2018. The government still allows 10% of the dwindling population to be commercially killed.



Profit Before Conservation



A great concern may be the apparent assumption by shooters and processors that they should be able to access a consistent (or increasing) number of kangaroos, and in a way that maximises their profits. Examples include:

- * Shooters controlling large numbers of kangaroos on a nightly basis to maximise profits, contrary to recommended best practice of controlling small numbers over a longer time period to scare remaining kangaroos from the area.
- * Shooters preferentially taking male kangaroos over female kangaroos, as their larger size means a higher profit; while the impacts of this are not clearly understood, there is a risk it may affect kangaroo population dynamics.
- * Shooters leaving “unsuitable” carcasses – including smaller female carcasses or incorrectly-shot carcasses – on properties and taking another kangaroo (i.e. overshooting) to make it “worth their while”.
- * Shooters complaining about not receiving permits for “enough numbers”.
- * Processors indicating frustration with not knowing when or how many carcasses might be coming in for processing.



Source: Victorian Kangaroo Pet Food Trial Evaluation Report

Where have all the big red kangaroos gone?

Male red kangaroos can weigh up to 92kg.



Why do red kangaroos killed by commercial shooters in South Australia and Western Australia only weigh an average of 25kg?

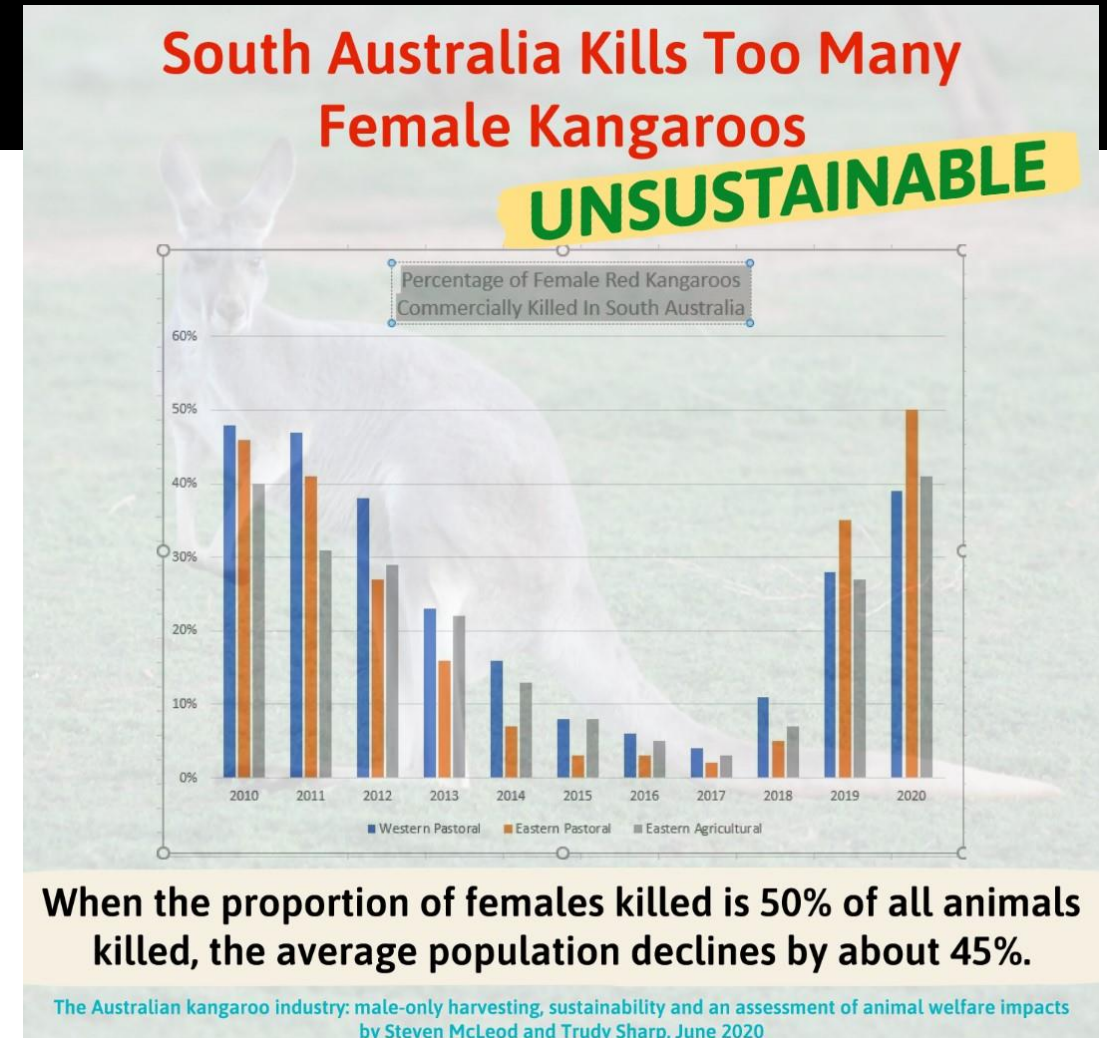
These kangaroos are only TWO years old.

Source: <https://australian.museum/learn/animals/mammals/red-kangaroo/>
https://www.environment.sa.gov.au/files/sharedassets/public/plants_and_animals/kangaroo-harvest-2020-rep.pdf
<https://www.dpaw.wa.gov.au/images/documents/plants-animals/animals/kangaroos/2020%20Annual%20Report%20on%20the%20Commercial%20Harvest%20of%20Kangaroos%20in%20Western%20Australia.pdf>

MYTH: The commercial industry kills males only

Scientists recommend that male kangaroos make up 70% of the commercial harvest to ensure sustainability.

During 2019, the following South Australian harvest zones killed an ecologically unsustainable percentage of females: Kingoonya (39% females), Marree Inside Dog Fence (53% females), Northeast Pastoral (45% females), North Flinders Ranges (41% females), South Flinders Ranges (42% females), Murray Mallee (38% females), Eastern Eyre Peninsula (35% females).



MYTH: During drought, the Industry kills large male kangaroos who are less likely to survive

The *Millennium Drought* lasted from 2001 to 2009. An examination of the harvesting of red kangaroos and western grey kangaroos in South Australia during 2009 reveals that an unsustainably high percentage of females were killed.

For example, females accounted for:

- 42% of red kangaroos commercially killed in the Gawler Ranges harvest zone
- 44% of red kangaroos commercially killed in the Kingoonya harvest zone
- 57% of red kangaroos commercially killed in the Marla-Oodnadatta (Outside Dog Fence) harvest zone
- 56% of red kangaroos commercially killed in the Marree (Inside Dog Fence) harvest zone
- 53% of red kangaroos commercially killed in the Marree (Outside Dog Fence) harvest zone
- 44% of red kangaroos commercially killed in the North Flinders Ranges harvest zone
- 51% of western grey kangaroos commercially killed in the Eastern Eyre Peninsula harvest zone
- 48% of western grey kangaroos commercially killed in the Hummocks harvest zone
- 42% of western grey kangaroos commercially killed in the Central Flinders harvest zone
- 44% of western grey kangaroos commercially killed in the Central Eyre Peninsula harvest zone



MYTH: Kangaroo numbers can explode

- Joey mortality is around 73% in good conditions, 100% during drought.
- The annual population growth for eastern grey kangaroos is 10%, red kangaroos is 13.5% and euro wallaroos is 12%.
- A female kangaroo reaches sexual maturity between 20 to 36 months.
- A joey remains in the mother's pouch for 8 to 12 months.
- Even after a joey leaves the pouch, the joey remains dependent on the mother until 18 months old.
- Therefore, a female kangaroo must be almost 4 years old to raise a joey to independence.
- A kangaroo's lifespan is between 9 and 12 years in the wild. Kangaroos can live longer in captivity.
- At best, a female kangaroo can produce 8 joeys in her lifetime.
- In good conditions, a female kangaroo will likely see two of her joeys survive to adulthood during her lifetime.

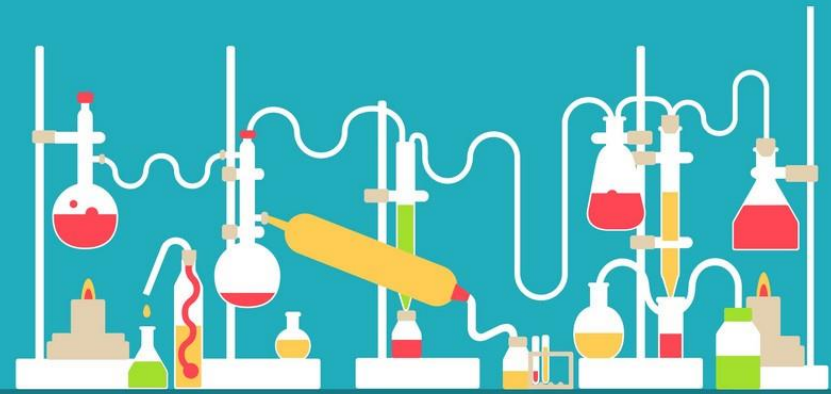
<https://www.kangaroosatrisk.net/2-biology-population-ecology.html>
<https://www.kangaroosatrisk.org/biology.html>

KANGAROOS ARE SLOW GROWING AND BREEDING

*A GREY KANGAROO'S LIFE SIMPLIFIED



1. A kangaroo doe will successfully raise her first independent joey at about 4 yrs and she will stop producing offspring by about 12 years.
[2015] Authorised by Senator Lee Rhiannon, 72 Campbell St, Surry Hills NSW 2010



SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

A study of tagged eastern grey kangaroos living relatively safely in an urban setting, moving between a golf course and native scrubland, revealed a high proportion (46%) of the tagged juveniles disappeared from the population before the age of three years.

The joeys were rarely found. The researchers concluded that these juveniles had died, because they were still dependent on, or closely associated with, their mothers.

The tagged kangaroos on the golf course have a density in summer that, over the years, ranged from 3.3 kangaroos per hectare to 3.6 kangaroos per hectare. This study revealed that the kangaroo population remained consistent over time rather than exploding, increasing or booming.

MYTH: Government population estimates are accurate and reliable

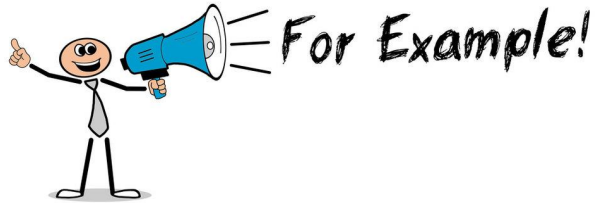


- In 2019, the New South Wales Government estimated that there were 0.9 red kangaroos per square kilometre in Cobar.
- The 2020 estimate increased the population by a biologically impossible 184%.
- Even with the 184% increase, the estimated population was only 2.5 kangaroos per square kilometre.

km. Although the critical minimum density is not clearly defined, populations below 2/sq km would generally be considered at risk of extinction. On

© Copyright Murray-Darling Basin Commission, NSW Agriculture 2004

- In 2021, the New South Wales Government set a high commercial kill quota on red kangaroos in Cobar of 17% (17,422).
- What if the increase of 184% is wrong?
- The 2019 estimated population was 36,058. A commercial kill quota of 17,422 is 48% of the entire 2019 population.



- In 2012, the South Australian Government estimated that there were 788 red kangaroos in the Murray Mallee. This figure is the equivalent of 0.04 red kangaroos per square kilometre.
- The South Australian Government set a commercial kill quota of 100 – 13% of the population.
- In 2013, the South Australian Government estimated that there were 5,516 red kangaroos in the Murray Mallee.
- The population allegedly increased from 0.04 red kangaroos per square kilometre to 0.28 red kangaroos per square kilometre.
- The South Australian Government recorded a biologically impossible 600% increase in red kangaroo numbers in the Murray Mallee between 2012 and 2013.

km. Although the critical minimum density is not clearly defined, populations below 2/sq km would generally be considered at risk of extinction. On

- On the estimated population of 0.28 kangaroos per square kilometre, the South Australian Government set a commercial kill quota of 13% or 700 red kangaroos.
- What if the 600% increase is wrong?
- The commercial kill quota of 700 wipes out the estimated population of 788.
- In the last 10 years, no red kangaroos have been commercially killed in the Murray Mallee, most likely because no one can find the estimated population.



“An analysis undertaken in late 2017 found that it would have required an increase in kangaroos processed of more than 50% - approximately 40,000 more over the trial period to that date – for sufficient commercial benefits to have been generated to offset the trial costs.”

Kangaroo Pet Food Trial Evaluation Report 2018, Victorian Government

- In 2018, Victoria’s estimated kangaroo population was 1,425,000.
- In 2020, Victoria’s estimated kangaroo population was 1,942,000.
- The increased population enabled the Victorian Government to increase the quota from 60,050 in 2020 to 95,680 in 2021 – an increase of almost 40,000.

2020 Victorian kangaroo population survey
Kangaroo Harvest Quota for Victoria, 2021 Fact Sheet
Victorian Kangaroo Harvest Management Plan 2020

In 2020, the Victorian Government announced that the state’s kangaroo population had defied years of drought and unprecedented bushfires to increase by 40%. The government also announced that commercial killing of kangaroos would expand by 40%. Coincidence?



MYTH: The killing of kangaroos is monitored

Unregulated Kangaroo Shooting

There are a range of issues associated with the commercial kangaroo industry, including:

- * the shooting of kangaroos is undertaken at night, and because of this wildlife officers have a limited ability to undertake field audits of shooters or properties;
- * the location of shooting and the identity of shooters working on any given night is unknown;
- * current policies and procedures classify this work as high risk as firearms are involved; and



- * reporting from processors and landholders is delayed and therefore does not provide real-time information that can be acted upon if breaches are detected.

Source: Victorian Government



This female kangaroo was shot in NSW under authority of the NSW Government.

This photo reveals that a baby joey, legs sticking out of mother's pouch, was left to die a slow, painful death.

The shooting of kangaroos is legalised animal cruelty and **MUST STOP NOW.**



Little 2kg Millie was found alone in a paddock after a night of shooting. Luckily someone saw Millie all alone and rescued her. By the time Millie reached a wildlife carer, she was lifeless after being on her feet without food or water for 36 hours.

During her first days in care, Millie was scared, confused, dehydrated and crying for her mummy. When Millie saw the bigger kangaroos in the sanctuary, she cried in hope that one of them was her mummy. Today, Millie is bright, alive, inquisitive, independent and loves being with her new kangaroo family.



Not all joeys are as lucky as Millie.

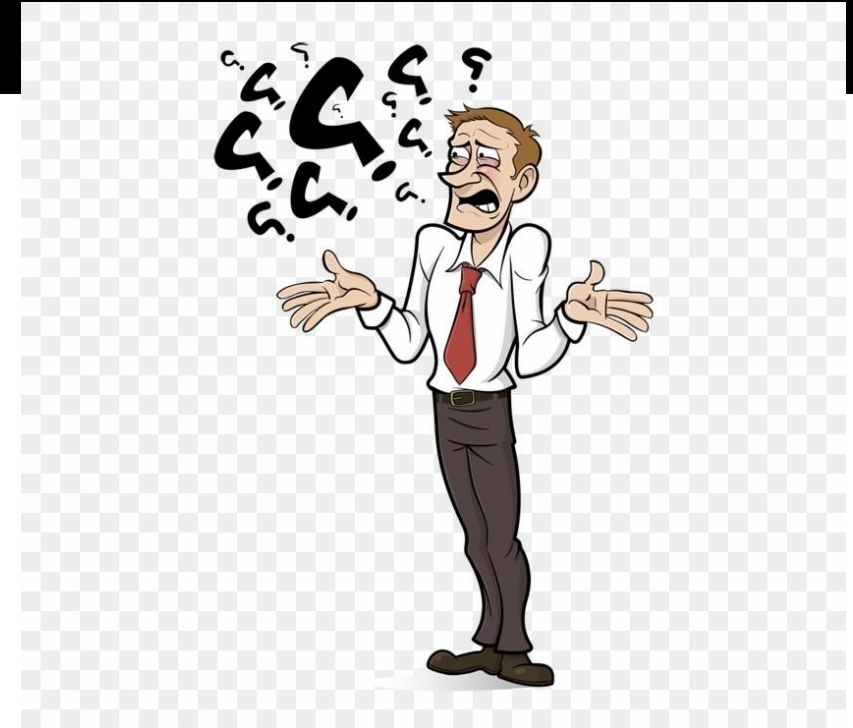


MYTH: Kangaroos damage the environment

Australia grazes 68 million sheep, 26 million cattle and 5 million goats.

Australia is home to at least 150 million feral rabbits, 24 million feral pigs, 4 to 6 million feral goats, 2 million feral deer and one million camels.

Approximately 183 million feral animals and 99 million commercially raised sheep, cattle and goats call Australia home – a total of 282 million. Yet the approximately 34 million native kangaroos are the ones blamed for the damage to Australia's environment.



<https://www.wool.com/market-intelligence/sheep-numbers-by-state/>

<https://www.mla.com.au/globalassets/mla-corporate/prices--markets/documents/trends--analysis/cattle-projections/april-update-australian-cattle-industry-projections-2021.pdf>

<https://www.queenslandcountrylife.com.au/story/3597297/global-goat-demand/><https://www.nma.gov.au/defining-moments/resources/rabbits-introduced>

<https://www.aph.gov.au/DocumentStore.ashx?id=cd67418e-1fc7-4659-acbf-bef252ad0c04&subId=662795>

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2021/jul/05/feral-deer-in-the-headlines-australias-slow-moving-plague-is-finally-being-noticed>

<https://www.environment.gov.au/system/files/resources/2060c7a8-088f-415d-94c8-5d0d657614e8/files/feral-camel-action-plan.pdf>

Native pasture cover and species richness declined with increasing rabbit density. By contrast, kangaroos had no negative effect on native pasture cover or species richness. The severely degraded state of native pastures is perpetuated by rabbits.

Little data is available to evaluate trends of herbivores within the agricultural zone of South Australia. Therefore, it's impossible to link kangaroo abundance directly to vegetation condition.

A report produced by the Commonwealth Government concluded that the destruction of native vegetation and biodiversity was caused by land clearance and the grazing of livestock.



[Density-dependent grazing impacts of introduced European rabbits and sympatric kangaroos on Australian native pastures](#) (Mutze et al, 2016)

[Eating away at protected areas: Total grazing pressure is undermining public land conservation](#) (Prowse et al, 2019)

[Assessment of Australia's Terrestrial Biodiversity](#), 2008

Adjacent paddocks at the base of the Flinders Ranges in South Australia. The left paddock is untouched. The right paddock has been decimated by grazing sheep.



Fact:

Native pasture cover and species richness declined with increasing rabbit density. By contrast, kangaroos had no negative effect on native pasture cover or species richness. The severely degraded state of native pastures is perpetuated by rabbits .

Source: Density-dependent grazing impacts of introduced European rabbits and sympatric kangaroos on Australian native pastures (Mutze et al, 2016)



As a keystone species, kangaroos are good for the environment because:

- **Kangaroos' soft padded feet and long tail are integral to the ecological health of the land, as regenerators of native grasses.**
- **Kangaroos' soft padded feet aerate soil and aid in seed dispersal.**
- **Kangaroo urine and faeces are natural fertilisers essential to the health of the soil.**
- **Kangaroo faeces attract earthworms who keep the soil healthy.**
- **Many species depend on the kangaroo.**

Dead kangaroos are no benefit to the environment!

Kangaroos must be alive to benefit the environment!

Save kangaroos, save the environment.

Sources:

<https://www.bendigoadvertiser.com.au/story/706205/kangaroos-have-beneficial-effect-on-environment/>

<https://districtbulletin.com.au/science-by-observation-on-the-farm/>

<https://districtbulletin.com.au/why-do-people-still-think-mass-killing-of-our-wildlife-is-ok/>

Our governments have many bogus reasons for culling kangaroos. The reasons include: kangaroos compete with livestock and cause too much grazing pressure (that is, eat too much grass).



**Research proves that kangaroos don't compete with livestock and that the grazing pressure of all kangaroos in Australia is between 1% and 8% of the total grazing pressure.
DON'T BUY THE LIES. Kangaroos are killed for money - profit - from the sale of their meat and skins.**

MYTH: Kangaroos have no predator

Kangaroos have many predators, including:

- Dingoes
- feral dogs and cats
- foxes - foxes kill 50% of all joeys born (Banks, 2000)
- wedge-tail eagles - between 80% and 90% of a wedge-tailed eagle's diet is made up of ground-dwelling animals, including wallabies and small kangaroos
- humans (the worst of all)

Besides the usual predators, millions of kangaroos are killed during drought and bushfires.



MYTH: Kangaroos compete with livestock

- Kangaroos may compete with wombats and rabbits, especially if resources are limited, but there is little evidence of competition between kangaroos and sheep. These conclusions support shifts in management from killing kangaroos for reasons of damage mitigation (i.e. competition with sheep), to the idea that kangaroos can be a sustainable resource that may be exploited.
- Kangaroos and livestock do not compete strongly for food, resource availability drives the grazing system, and mixed species grazing regimes (kangaroos and livestock) are more productive and ecologically sound.

[Review of Scientific Literature Relevant to the Commercial Harvest Management of Kangaroos](#) (Herbert and Elzer)
[Situation Analysis Report Update on Current State of Scientific Knowledge on Kangaroos in the Environment, Including Ecological and Economic Impact and Effect of Culling](#) (Olsen and Low, 2006)

Why does South Australia commercially kill kangaroos at risk of extinction for their meat and skins?
"For South Australia, the export of kangaroo products is a key issue." (Natural Resources Committee, 2019)



LIE: This plan has been developed to guide the sustainable management of commercially harvested kangaroos in South Australia. (South Australian Commercial Kangaroo Management Plan 2020-2024)



TRUTH: The outcomes of the commercial harvesting system are primarily driven by market demand. (Chief Executive, John Schutz, SA Department for Environment and Water, 2019)

Fifty sheep drink as much as 350 kangaroos and 50 cows drink as much as 2,650 kangaroos (Munn et al 2014; NSW DPI 2014). Fifty sheep eat as much as 250 kangaroos and 50 cows eat as much as 3,000 kangaroos (Grigg 2002).



**A tiny herd of cattle or flock of sheep
does a lot more damage than
kangaroos could ever do!**



MYTH: Kangaroos damage crops, fences, and equipment

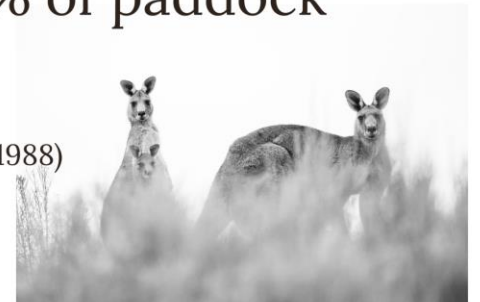
- There is little convincing evidence of substantial damage by kangaroos to crops, pastoral production or rangelands, except in a few localized areas.
- Crop and Pasture Reports detail damage to crops and pasture in the various regions of South Australia. Damage is caused by insects, mice, viruses and disease, wind, frost, hail, and rain, but kangaroo damage is never mentioned.

[Situation Analysis Report Update on Current State of Scientific Knowledge on Kangaroos in the Environment, Including Ecological and Economic Impact and Effect of Culling](https://www.pir.sa.gov.au/primary_industry/crops_and_pastures/crop_and_pasture_reports) (Olsen and Low, 2006)
https://www.pir.sa.gov.au/primary_industry/crops_and_pastures/crop_and_pasture_reports

Fact:

Estimation of crop damage (from kangaroos) made in one year shows that damage was restricted to those parts within 100 m of the reserve. The crop losses appear to be around 1% of paddock yields.

Source: (Arnold & Steven, 1988)



MYTH: Eating kangaroo is better for the environment

A University of New South Wales study concluded that we can reduce greenhouse gases by replacing sheep and cattle with 175 million kangaroos.

Since 2001, drought has caused Australia's kangaroo populations to decline from 57 million to 33 million.



Kangaroo instead of sheep and cattle IS NOT an option!

We don't have enough kangaroos!

Sources: <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-australia-kangaroos-idUSSYD8867720080808>
Each state Kangaroo Harvest Quota Report

Queensland Meat Processors import dead wallabies from Tasmania because there aren't enough kangaroos in Queensland.

New South Wales Meat Processors import dead wallabies from Tasmania because there aren't enough kangaroos in New South Wales.

Victorian Meat Processors import dead kangaroos from New South Wales and South Australia because there aren't enough kangaroos in Victoria.

South Australian Meat Processors import dead kangaroos from Queensland and New South Wales because there aren't enough kangaroos in South Australia.

Western Australian Meat Processors import dead kangaroos from New South Wales, South Australia, Victoria and Queensland because there aren't enough kangaroos in Western Australia.

There aren't enough kangaroos!

Sources:
Wildlife Trade Operation Proposal, Wild Game Resources Australia
Lodden Herald Leader July 29, 2021
2019 Commercial Kangaroo Harvest Report for South Australia
<https://www.abc.net.au/news/rural/2016-05-03/wa-kangaroo-meat-shock/7379196>



MYTH: The killing of pouch young is humane



Unregulated Kangaroo Shooting

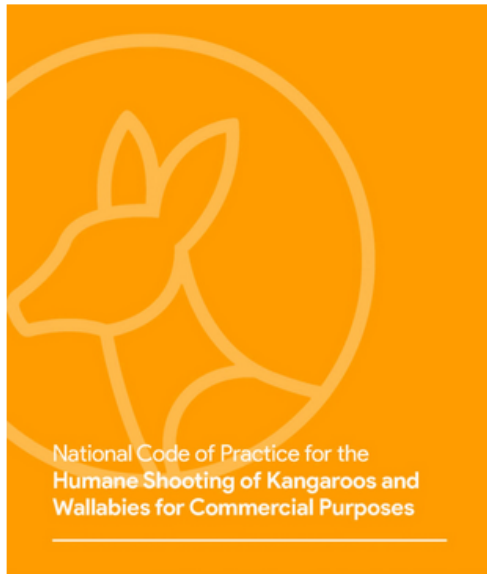
There are a range of issues associated with the commercial kangaroo industry, including:

- * the shooting of kangaroos is undertaken at night, and because of this wildlife officers have a limited ability to undertake field audits of shooters or properties;
- * the location of shooting and the identity of shooters working on any given night is unknown;
- * current policies and procedures classify this work as high risk as firearms are involved; and
- * reporting from processors and landholders is delayed and therefore does not provide real-time information that can be acted upon if breaches are detected.




Source: Victorian Government

The following instructions on how to kill a joey are taken from the National Code of Practice for the Humane Shooting of Kangaroos and Wallabies for Commercial Purposes.



November 2020

National Code of Practice for the Humane Shooting of Kangaroos and Wallabies for Commercial Purposes

[Download PDF](#) 

The National Code of Practice for the Humane Shooting of Kangaroos and Wallabies for Commercial Purposes (The Code) is a national document intended to guide regulation of humane harvesting practices for the commercial kangaroo industry in Australia. It sets an achievable expected standard for the commercial industry that is backed by evidence-based policy and reinforces the commitment of all parties to the welfare of kangaroos and wallabies.

Want to be notified of similar content?

[Sign up](#)

Concussive blow to the head

- The most suitable method that is currently available for the euthanasia of partially-furred to fully-furred young is a concussive blow to the head (also called blunt force trauma). This method is considered acceptable as the skulls of pouch young are small, soft and thin. When it is applied correctly, unconsciousness and death will occur rapidly.
- A single sharp blow to the central skull bones induces death by physical (or mechanical) damage to the central nervous system and disruption of brain activity. Death then occurs as a result of respiratory and cardiac failure.
- The efficiency and humaneness of this method depends on the operator's skill and determination. The concussive blow must be delivered with sufficient force and be precisely on target to ensure that adequate damage occurs to vital structures of the brain to cause immediate and sustained unconsciousness and death.
- If this procedure is not performed correctly there will be varying degrees of consciousness and it is likely that the animal will suffer prior to death. If the first blow does not hit the skull but hits, for example, the jaw or a limb, or if the brain is not sufficiently destroyed, then the animal will experience pain and distress.
- To deliver the concussive blow, carefully remove the young from the pouch (note they are not permanently attached to the teat at this stage of development but could still be suckling), hold the young firmly by the hindquarters (around the top of the back legs and base of tail) and then swing firmly and quickly in an arc so that the rear of the joey's head is hit against a large solid surface that will not move or compress during the impact (e.g. the tray of a utility vehicle).
- DO NOT hit the joeys' head against the railing of the utility rack, as this can result in decapitation rather than the intended concussive blow to the head.
- DO NOT suspend joeys upside down by the hindquarters or tail and then try to hit the head with an iron bar (or similar). Holding them in this manner allows the joey to move around and makes it difficult to make contact with the correct location on the head. In addition, the force of the blow may not be sufficient to render the joey unconscious with only one strike.

Australian Government Rules on How to Kill a Joey

A concussive blow to the head (also called blunt force trauma).



Joeys this size are killed by blunt force trauma.

To deliver the concussive blow, carefully remove the young from the pouch (note they are not permanently attached to the teat at this stage of development but could still be suckling), hold the young firmly by the hindquarters (around the top of the back legs and base of tail) and then swing firmly and quickly in an arc so that the rear of the joey's head is hit against a large solid surface that won't move or compress during impact (e.g. the tray of a utility vehicle).

Source: National Code of Practice for the Humane Shooting of Kangaroos and Wallabies for Commercial Purposes



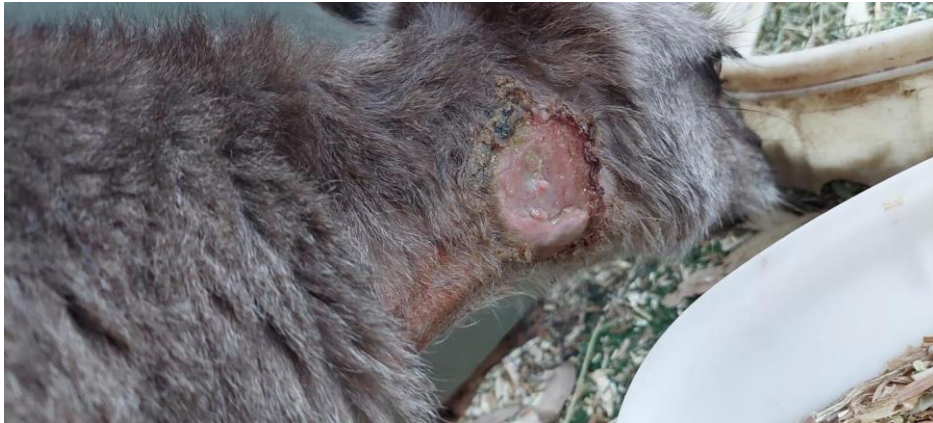
- On 2 November 2021, Gumby's Kangaroo and Wildlife Sanctuary received a phone call from a member of the public about a joey who had been shot in the head but was still alive.
- Andrew Oswald responded to euthanise the joey. He said that the wound was already infested with maggots, so presumably the wound was days old.
- The joey survived the gunshot, proving once again that a gunshot to the head can wound a kangaroo and inflict great suffering as the kangaroo dies a slow, painful death.



MYTH: The killing of adult kangaroos is humane

- Targeted animals must be killed with a head shot (unless they are wounded or injured, refer to Section 3 of the Code).
- An accurately placed head shot will result in immediate unconsciousness and rapid death [7, 10, 11].
- To minimise the risk of wounding and to improve shooting accuracy, target animals must be clearly visible, stationary (except when shooting wounded or injured animals) and standing upright.
- Shooting from a moving vehicle is not permitted as this also affects shooting accuracy.

Photos tell the story of too many kangaroos being shot in other parts of their bodies, not the heads, and therefore dying slow, painful deaths. Thanks to the Facebook page [Kangaroo Industry - Dirty Graphic Truth](#) for the following photos.





MYTH: Kangaroo meat is healthy

Disease and Bacteria

- Given that bacteria can double their numbers every twenty minutes, it takes only 5 hours for one bacterium to reach sufficient numbers to cause carcass spoilage and possible food poisoning.
- Shooters are supposed to monitor the movement of a kangaroo to look for signs of sickness. Yet, monitoring is impossible because shooting animals at night requires them to be transfixed by a spotlight. If a kangaroo is ill, the dark colouring of the meat hides any visual clues of infection.
- Toxoplasmosis and Salmonellosis are two infections with public health significance related to the handling, processing and consumption of kangaroo meat. *Toxoplasmosis* can cause serious illness, brain damage and death.
- Kangaroo meat contains high levels of L-carnitine, which causes the build-up of plaque in arteries responsible for heart attacks, strokes, and vascular disease.
- Every time independent testing is conducted on kangaroo meat, the results indicate high levels of dangerous bacteria, including salmonella, *E. coli*, streptococcus, and staphylococcus.
- Pets can also become sick from the bacteria and pathogens found in kangaroo meat. In addition, kangaroo pet meat is preserved with toxic sulphites. These sulphites cause Thiamine Deficiency in pets, which can be fatal.

[Toxoplasmosis \(Better Health Channel\)](#)

[Kangaroo meat not as healthy as you think \(The Age\)](#)

[The Raw Truth on Raw Dog Food Diets \(Australian Dog Lover\)](#)

ABC RURAL

Russia bans kangaroo meat due to unacceptable levels of E.coli

ABC Rural / By Virginia Tapp

Posted Mon 18 Aug 2014 at 12:23pm, updated Tue 19 Aug 2014 at 11:21am





Thanks to the Facebook page [Kangaroo Industry - Dirty Graphic Truth](#) for the following photos.



MYTH: Kangaroo slaughter is hygienic

Contamination

Contamination is anything on or in a meat product that shouldn't be there. The 3 main types of contamination:

- microbiological – e.g. any microorganisms or bacteria that gets on the meat from unclean hands, dirty equipment, faeces, ingesta or the skin of the animal during field harvesting operations.
- physical – e.g. dirt, dust, hair, leaves, faeces, ingesta.
- chemical – e.g. agricultural chemicals used on farms, or cleaning chemicals not properly rinsed off equipment that could get into the meat.

Examples of physical contamination include hanging dead kangaroos off the outside of the hunter's open vehicle, overcrowding of dead bodies on the vehicle, and making incorrect cuts that allow faeces, urine, fur, dirt and dust to spill onto the meat or other dead kangaroos.

Chemical contamination can occur if kangaroos have been foraging in areas treated or contaminated by chemicals, such as sprayed farmland.

- **Bacteria** – are found in three basic types:
 - Harmless (used in the production of cheese, beer, wine, salami)
 - Food spoilage (Sour milk, slimy meat)
 - Food poisoning (Salmonella, E coli)

Bacteria are the **main** cause of food poisoning in humans and can be found everywhere; on the skin and in the gut, nose and throat of animals and humans.

How do bacteria multiply?

Bacteria multiply by simply *splitting or dividing*. This allows them to reach **incredibly large numbers** very quickly.

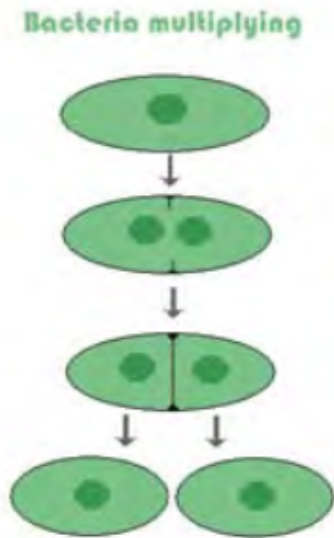


Diagram 1. How bacteria grow by splitting or dividing.

A single bacterium may not pose a great threat to human health, but as it multiplies and generates a large bacterial population then there is a risk of food poisoning or product spoilage.

In the environment where harvesting occurs, there is never just one bacterium; most surfaces will have a high number of bacteria normally.



Even though bacteria are invisible to the naked eye, we transfer millions of bacteria every day without even realising it.

The reason for sanitary dressing is to minimise the number of bacteria on the exposed surfaces of the meat and therefore prevent food spoilage and maximise shelf life.

Kangaroos hanging off sides of vehicles, which is a commonplace breach of the rules.



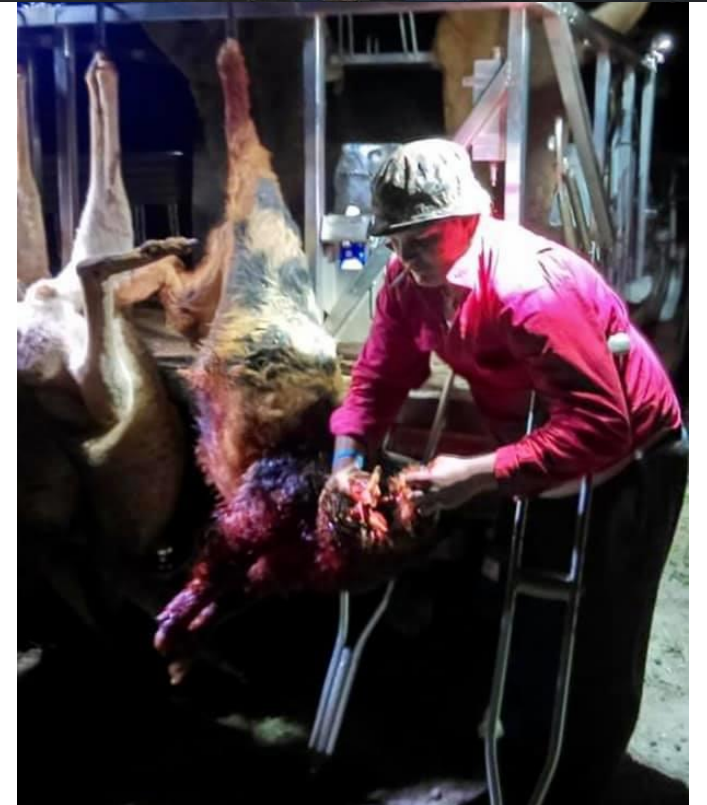
Kangaroos hanging off sides of vehicles and being overcrowded in breach of the rules.



Cross-contamination between species.



Shooters do not have to wear gloves or any protective clothing. Cross-contamination is inevitable. The slaughter is performed in the dirt.



Cross-contamination of blood.
Shooters do not have to keep surfaces clean and hygienic.



- Kangaroos are not farmed. Wild kangaroos are shot during the night in rural locations.
- Shooters aren't monitored or policed because they work in rural locations from dusk to dawn, even on weekends.
- Hunters leave dead kangaroos on the ground, touching each other, causing cross-contamination, and the bodies to be covered in dirt and insects.
- For transport, dead kangaroos are hung from the back of an open truck. As the truck travels through the night, dust, flies and faeces cover the dead bodies.
- Shooters often travel long distances for their night's kill.
- In summer, night-time temperatures are still between 25°C and 35°C. Kangaroo carcasses can hang on the back of open trucks, covered in flies, dust and faeces, up to 14 hours in temperatures of 25°C to 35°C.



- The food poisoning bacteria that are a major concern with harvesting and initial chilling of wild animal carcasses grow between the temperatures of 7°C and 60°C.
- Bacteria act like a time bomb. The bomb goes off if the carcasses carrying harmful bacteria are kept between 5 - 60°C for longer than 4 to 6 hours.
- Federal laws allow shooters to hang dead kangaroos on the back of open-air trucks for up to 14 hours.
- Shipping containers are used to store kangaroo carcasses in rural areas.
- Federal laws allow dead kangaroos to be stored up to 14 days from the time of kill to processing (that is, processed product).
- Testing found that chiller boxes are unhygienic – unclean; uncleanable; a big incidence of fly-struck meat; congealed blood and muck.









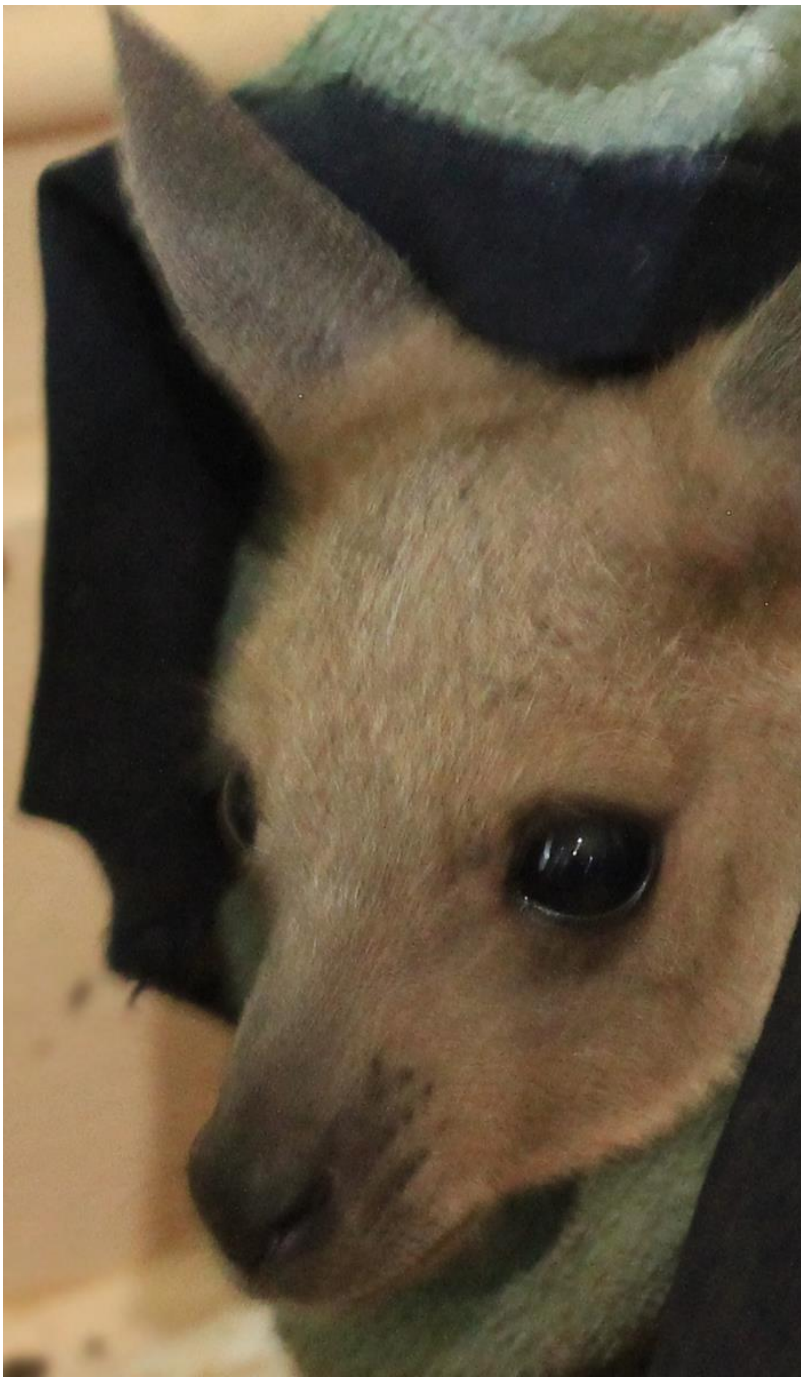












WEBSITES

www.friendsofmotherearth.org.au

www.peopleagainstkillingkangaroos.org.au

