




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR HILL

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ADJOURNMENT

Feral Pigs

 **Mr KNUTH** (Hill—KAP) (7.17 pm): I rise again to speak on the most environmentally destructive pest we have in Australia—that is, feral pigs. I have spoken about this numerous times in this parliament and governments have continued to dodge, weave and hide from the problem. The problem gets worse every year. The last estimate of feral pig numbers in Australia was over 24 million, with a large percentage in North Queensland. Feral pigs can produce up to 20 piglets per year, which reveals why numbers are in plague proportions.

During the last sitting week the government patted themselves on the back for acquiring another property to convert to national park. The problem is that these acquisitions are not managed at all and become breeding grounds for feral pigs and noxious weeds. Farmers with properties surrounding these state forests are experiencing mass destruction of crops and the spread of disease such as Panama and Lepto. Feral pigs are killing our cassowaries, digging up our turtle eggs and creating mass soil erosion by digging up our river banks, rainforests and prime agricultural land. It is at the point now where we have pigs digging up residential yards in Mission Beach because of the sheer number of pigs in the surrounding regions. I table an article.

Tabled paper: Article from *Cairns Local News* online, dated 1 October 2021, titled 'Feral pigs return to Mission Beach' [1828](#).

I want to acknowledge our recreational pig hunters, who do a fantastic job in their own time and at their own expense to combat the feral pig problem with one hand tied behind their back. The government not only gives our rural communities the gift of more vast breeding grounds for feral pigs but will not even allow access for recreational hunters to clean out the feral pigs.

There is a way to fix this. I call on the minister for agriculture to: issue special permits for recreational hunters to access state forests and national parks to cull the feral pigs; establish a feral pig bounty program; provide sufficient funding for aerial pig-shooting programs; invest to properly manage state forests and coordinate with surrounding property owners; and establish a grant program with both federal and state governments to assist farmers to manage feral pigs.

I would also like to point out that the latest research conducted by the University of Queensland shows that by uprooting carbon trapped in soil it is estimated that feral pigs are causing emissions to the equivalent of more than 1.1 million cars globally each year. This is considered a conservative estimate and could be three times higher. If the state government is truly serious about reducing carbon emissions by 30 per cent by the year 2030, then increasing funding to feral pig management is a logical place to start.