Why is it important?

Appropriate preparation of meat baits helps to ensure that they are available, attractive, palatable and toxic to wild dogs while minimising the risk to native animals.

Proper preparation of meat baits:

- minimises 1080 solution leakage and the risk of the needle punching through the meat
- prolongs the life of the bait
- optimises placement when dropped from an aircraft.

What meat?

Meat for wild dog baits must be:

- fresh boneless red meat, cut from a single block of muscle, with ragged edges, fat and connective tissue trimmed off;
- fresh offal is not recommended for aerial baiting as it can fall apart on impact.

What size?

The fresh meat must be cut into pieces that:

- weigh as close as possible to 250 grams
- are as fist or heart shaped as possible
- are air dried so that liquid is not leaking from the meat (but not dried to less than 70% of its original weight).

Figure 1. A “model” meat bait of ideal shape and size is used to guide the preparation of other baits (Guy Ballard).

Figure 2. Three meat baits supplied for 1080 injection. Only the middle (250 g) is acceptable (Guy Ballard).
Size matters - preparing meat baits for wild dog control

Following these guidelines for preparing meat for 1080 wild dog baits will ensure you meet your legal requirements and help to ensure that baiting is socially acceptable.

How should I dry meat for baits?

There are two main ways to dry meat for baits. Field drying racks should be at least 900 mm above the ground. Place them in direct sunlight and ensure air can flow both above and below the meat.

During the drying process, protect baits from scavengers with a layer of 25 mm mesh (Figure 3). Off-setting it above the baits can reduce take by birds. Protection from insects is also important to maintain meat quality. If flies are active, drying baits in a cool room may be more appropriate.

In cool rooms, place baits on racks to permit draining and ensure sufficient space for air flow between them. Fans can be used to increase airflow (Figure 4).

Following these guidelines for preparing meat for 1080 wild dog baits will ensure you meet your legal requirements and help to ensure that baiting is socially acceptable.

Figure 3. A wire-covered drying rack prevents birds and scavengers from removing baits (Mark Lamb).

Figure 4. Bait shelves used to dry baits under cover and away from scavengers (Toby O’Brien).

More Information

For more information on pest animal management visit www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/biosecurity/vertebrate-pests/publications

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