



The Hon. David Littleproud MP
Minister for Agriculture and Northern Australia
Deputy Leader of the Nationals

M E D I A R E L E A S E

Wednesday 23rd March 2022

Ticking off funds for remote dog disease

- **\$150,000 Australian Government pilot funding to increase canine ehrlichiosis [pronounced AIR-LIK-EE-O-SIS] awareness in northern Australia.**
- **Tick-borne disease impacting remote communities and dog populations.**

A Northern Territory campaign to increase awareness in remote communities of a serious tick-borne disease has been given a \$150,000 boost by the Australian Government.

Minister for Agriculture and Northern Australia David Littleproud said the disease ehrlichiosis is caused by the tick-borne bacteria *Ehrlichia canis* and is carried by the brown dog tick, which is present across northern Australia.

“The number of infections in dogs is continuing to increase in northern Australia’s vulnerable Indigenous communities, with prevalence rates of up to 100 per cent in some places,” Minister Littleproud said.

“This disease is relatively new to Australia, having first been detected in Western Australia in May 2020. It was then confirmed in the Northern Territory and South Australia within a year.

“Dog mortality rates range from 10-30 per cent. However, the disease can be effectively controlled through a combination of antibiotic treatment, preventative measures such as tick collars and containing infected dogs.

“It’s not just an animal-health issue, dogs are an integral social part of many rural people’s lives. People travelling to affected areas with dogs should also be alert to the dangers to their canine companions.

“The \$150k supports pilot work with communities to increase their understanding of the disease and improve management strategies. I acknowledge the efforts of the Northern Territory government to manage this disease in the Top End.”

For more information visit [Ehrlichiosis in dogs | National pest & disease outbreaks](#)

Fast Facts:

- **Ehrlichiosis occurs worldwide, particularly in tropical and sub-tropical regions.**
- **Ehrlichiosis-infected dogs can develop anaemia, bleeding episodes, lameness, eye problems (including haemorrhage into the eyes or blindness), neurological problems and swollen limbs.**
- **Spread of *Ehrlichia canis* bacteria from the tick to the dog usually occurs about 24 hours after the tick has begun feeding.**
- **The Australian Government is collaborating with the states and territories on ehrlichiosis through the Animal Health Committee, comprising Chief Veterinary Officers from each jurisdiction. The committee is finalising nationally consistent management strategies for the disease.**

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