



# Rabbit control using Pindone poison

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*This Landcare Note describes methods of controlling rabbits using Pindone.*

See also Landcare Note LC0294 *Rabbits: integrated rabbit control.*

## Pindone

Pindone is a registered rabbit poison that comes in two forms: - powder form and liquid) both of which are applied to bait material either carrots or oats.

### Bait material

Carrots are registered as a bait material for PIN25 . Carrots and oats are registered for *Rabbait* Aqueous Pindone Concentrate. Pindone treated oats are available as a pre-prepared bait in the commercial products: *Rabbait* Pindone Oat Bait and *ALDI BUNNYBAIT™*

## Pindone use in Victoria

Pindone bait is available for use by land managers to control rabbits. Pindone bait is well suited to use in urban and urban/rural areas. Pindone bait has an antidote, vitamin K1, and is generally safer to use than 1080 (sodium monofluoroacetate) where non target animals like domestic dogs are at risk.

## Procedure for use of Pindone

### *Always read the label, heed the label*

The product label provides specific directions for use and must be read, and understood prior to use of any agricultural product.

## The best time to poison

### *“rabbits can be poisoned at anytime that they will readily take oat or carrot bait”*

Most rabbit poisoning occurs in the late summer/early autumn period because:

- Myxomatosis, RCD and natural causes have reduced rabbit numbers.
- feed is at a minimum and rabbits are foraging for food
- rabbits are old to enough to emerge from the burrow (21-25 days) and will eat the bait

- breeding is usually over and so rabbits range over greater distances

## Preparation and planning

### *“Have a goal: aim to be free of rabbits!”*

You must know:

- how many rabbits you have on your property
- numbers of rabbits & location of rabbits on adjoining properties
- if rabbits are moving across your boundaries
- what type of harbour are rabbits living in or under
- where the rabbits are feeding (on your property /your neighbours/both)
- what non-targets are there, (native/domestic), are they at risk (primary/secondary poisoning)

### *Remember*

- rabbits may move from property to property, and die on neighbouring properties and put non target species, such as dogs, at risk
- keep dogs away from baits and poisoned carcasses; consider muzzling dogs for the duration of poisoning programs

## Essential knowledge

### *“the rabbit can only die if it eats the bait”*

- Most rabbits feed within 25 m of the burrow (look for and find all burrow/warren feeding areas)
- Rabbit feeding occurs where short to very short grass is obvious near the burrow(s), or nearby feeding areas

### *Help yourself: make the time to do the job properly*

- Poisoning involves collecting information, evaluation and good thorough action.
- Success depends on equipping yourself for the task.

### *This must happen!*

### *“all of the rabbit population must be at risk from the poison program”*

- Every rabbit must get to eat the free feed (unpoisoned bait) to successfully take the poison bait

- Lay enough free feed bait for every rabbit
- Bait material treated with *Rabbait* Aqueous Pindone Concentrate can act as a free feed and free feeding baiting may not be necessary
- Check free feeds, or treated bait each day to check on the amount of bait taken and that the bait is placed where the rabbits are feeding
- Make sure rabbits can feed undisturbed on your free feed bait or poison bait (Do not shoot or hunt during baiting).
- Work with your neighbours to clear big areas for long term control

#### **Why free feed rabbits?**

Free feeding, or laying of two or more unpoisoned baits can greatly improve the results for successful poisoning. Free feeding helps rabbits to acquire a taste for the bait (carrots/oats). Rabbits can be shy of new things, like a new feed source in their environment; free feeding encourages rabbits to feed on the new feed source. The careful monitoring of rabbit numbers and the free feeds taken will enable you to accurately estimate the quantity of poisoned bait needed for the rabbits you have on your land.

#### **Map the area: plan for success**

Make a plan of the area to be poisoned, identify these features on your plan:

- feeding areas
- areas of wildlife congregation
- rocky areas
- warrens/burrows that can be dug out, ripped/destroyed
- steep areas
- rivers, streams
- above ground surface harbour (weeds, wood heaps)
- boundary fences (rabbit proof)

#### **Trail baiting: the method**

A trail is a furrow cut into the ground that is approximately 10 cm deep and 12 cm wide. The trail can be cut by hand using a hoe; a disc pulled behind a vehicle or a specifically designed baitlayer. Bait (cut carrots/oats) are placed into the trail, firstly as free feed (unpoisoned bait and used to get rabbits accustomed to the bait) and later as poisoned bait.

#### **Equipment: what is needed!**

Bait laying equipment for a poisoning program can be obtained or hired from most Landcare groups, some equipment hire firms, some pest control contractors and NRE regional offices or work centres.

Contact your local NRE office, Rabbit Action Group and/or Landcare group for more information.

### **Good quality baits**

#### **Carrot baits**

It is essential to use good quality bait material.

Best results are achieved with good quality carrots, fed to rabbits the same day as they are cut. Feeding at dusk ensures the carrots don't dry out in the sun, and stay fresh and attractive to rabbits for a longer time.

#### **Oat baits**

Oats must be clean and free from other grains and/or chaff.

Using oats may require 3-4 free feeds to achieve good levels of uptake. Oat bait is commercially manufactured as pre-prepared poisoned bait material. (Eg. *Rabbait Pindone Oat Bait*)

### **How to conduct a Pindone poisoning program**

The density of rabbits feeding on the bait should be monitored prior to, and after poisoning, to determine the effectiveness of the program. (See Landcare Note LC0334: *Rabbits: monitoring rabbit populations*)

#### **Using PIN 25 - Pindone Carrots Rabbit Bait**

1. Monitor site
2. Assess infestation
3. Notify neighbours, as appropriate
4. Erect appropriate warning signs prior to laying bait

#### **Laying poison PIN 25 Pindone Carrots Rabbit Bait:**

- Two free feeds 3-4 days apart
- Monitor bait take and adjust bait quantities to be laid (*if bait taken - replace feed, if no bait taken - do not replace feed*)
- First poison feed: minimum of 2 days after the last free feed.
- Second poison feed: 2 days after the first poison feed.
- Monitor take after 1st/2nd poison feeds and adjust the quantity laid to account for take.
- Collect all uneaten bait/ cover trail immediately
- Collect all carcasses for up to 8-12 days after the last poison feed.

#### **Using Rabbait Aqueous Pindone Concentrate**

1. Monitor site
2. Assess infestation
3. Select bait material (carrots or oats)
4. Notify neighbours, as appropriate

#### **Laying Rabbait Aqueous Pindone Carrot Bait (Oat bait may require 1-2 free feeds to get rabbits feeding eg:**

*ALDI BUNNYBAIT™ / RABBAIT* Pindone Oat Bait)

- Lay 3 poison feeds three - five days apart
- Example program:-

- 1st Poison feed Monday
- 2nd Poison feed Friday
- 3rd Poison feed Tuesday
- Monitor take after 1st/2nd poison feeds and adjust quantity laid to account for take.
- Collect all uneaten bait/ cover trail immediately
- Collect all carcasses for up to 8-12 days after the last poison feed.

#### ***Monitoring of free feeds and bait take***

Monitoring of free feeds is essential to ensure there is a minimal risk to non-target species, and to estimate the adjustment of the quantity of bait required and if necessary, changing the placement of baits.

#### **Cleaning up**

On each day of the control program, the baited area and surrounding areas must be thoroughly searched for dead rabbits. Carcasses must be collected and properly disposed of to lessen the risk to non-target species

#### ***Integrated rabbit control***

#### ***Beating the rabbit; saving native plants, your garden and money!***

Check the rabbit prone areas, by spotlighting, monitoring warrens for active burrows, and looking for rabbits 2 hours prior to sunset at least 4 times a year, early summer, autumn, mid winter and during spring.

Any land managers can protect their investment by monitoring rabbit populations and taking immediate action as soon as rabbits are found. Controlling rabbits when populations are low saves pasture, native vegetation and money!

#### **Safety**

#### ***“its your responsibility”***

Ensure all bait material and carcasses are not available to non-targets. Follow direction for use and handling as specified on the label.

#### **Further information**

Contact the local office of the Department of Natural Resources and Environment, local agricultural supplier or registered pest control contractor.

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