

FERAL HOGS:

The Good, The Bad or The Ugly?

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Texas Wildlife Association-Webinar Co-Sponsor

Hogs Are Good



**INCOME
POTENTIAL:**

**Hunting
Leases**

**Marketing
Live Hogs to
Processors!**



Hogs Are Bad





Hogs were first brought to the U.S. mainland by:

- a. Hernando de Soto in 1539
- b. Christopher Columbus in 1492
- c. A disillusioned wildlife biologist in 1937



Feral hog populations with domestic ancestry are the most common morphotype found in the United States.

True
or
False?



Hogs in Texas

Mid 1500's - de Soto introduced hogs

1565 - Spanish colonists drove swine north across the Rio Grande to avoid Indians

1670 - Hogs brought north to Texas as a food source for missions

1685 - LaSalle brought hogs to coast

1850 to 1950's - Domestic swine allowed to free range across east, central and south Texas

"At this camp (near Crockett) we were annoyed by hogs beyond all description. At almost every camp we were surrounded by them; but here they seemed perfectly frantic and delirious with hunger. These animals proved indeed, throughout Texas, a disgusting annoyance."

Frederick Law Olmstead
- mid 1800's



"Vast herds of hogs, estimated at 18,000 head, roamed the woods and lived off bountiful acorn crops"

History of Cherokee County-circa 1850



"They have a HUGH wild hog problem here in the area.....Pigs have destroyed some farmers crops and are wreaking havoc all over the countryside by even going into people's houses. Needless to say because of security reasons, the farmers can't go out and use their guns to shoot the pests, so right now they are kind of at the mercy of the pigs."

Wendy Flatt
PRT-Ag Advisor
Kirkuk, Iraq-2009

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The first pure "Russian" wild boars were brought into the United States in:

- a. New Hampshire
- b. Texas
- c. California

A close-up photograph of a wild boar's head, showing its dark, shaggy fur and a prominent tusk. The boar is looking towards the right of the frame. The background is slightly blurred, showing some dry grass or straw.

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Feral hogs, Russian wild boars and their crosses exist in how many states?

- a. 12
- b. 45
- c. 40

A white outline map of the United States with black lines delineating the boundaries of all 50 states. The map is positioned on the right side of the slide, below the question text.

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www.feralswinemap.org





Hog Tracks

(Hog tracks appear more "rounded" than deer tracks)



Questions?

The state with the largest feral hog population is:

- a. Texas
- b. Florida
- c. California



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(U.S. population = 4-5 million?)

FERAL HOG EXPANSION

- 1988—462 U.S. counties had feral hogs
- 2004—1,042 U.S. counties had feral hogs
- Increase of 125% !!!
- 40 states and 4 Canadian Provinces as of 2009



How Did We Get So Many So Fast?

- Generalist omnivores
- Intelligent
- Indiscriminant stockings
- Supplementally fed
- High reproductive rates



Feral hogs are carriers for both swine brucellosis and pseudorabies.



Pseudorabies and Brucellosis

- Pseudorabies—Not a rabies but a Herpes virus. Adults can be silent carriers and shed the virus thru nose and mouth. Can spread to livestock* and dogs.
- Brucellosis—Bacterium can cause sows to abort and infertility in boars. Spread to domestic swine and occasionally cattle. Humans susceptible when field dressing.

*30 cows lost in Dimmit County



Average litter size for feral hog sows is:

- a. 4-6
- b. 8-10
- c. 10-12



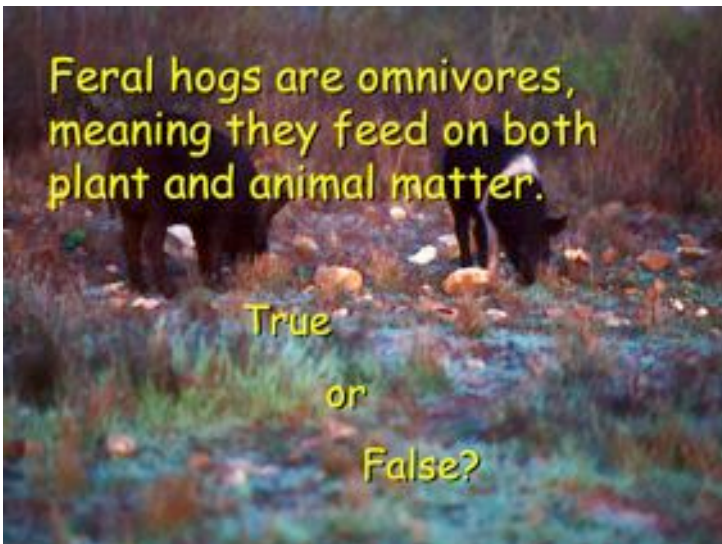
The best developed sense in feral hogs is:

- a. Sight
- b. Hearing
- c. Smell



Feral hogs are omnivores, meaning they feed on both plant and animal matter.

True
or
False?





**Texas Agricultural Damage
\$52,000,000 each year**



Urban/Suburban Landscape Damage





**Nationwide Damage
\$ 800 million - \$1.5 billion
annually**

Questions?

Control Options



Legal control methods for feral hogs in Texas include:

- Shooting
- Trapping/Snaring
- Catch dogs
- Toxicants

There are no toxicants approved for controlling feral hogs!





Aerial Control

Advantages:

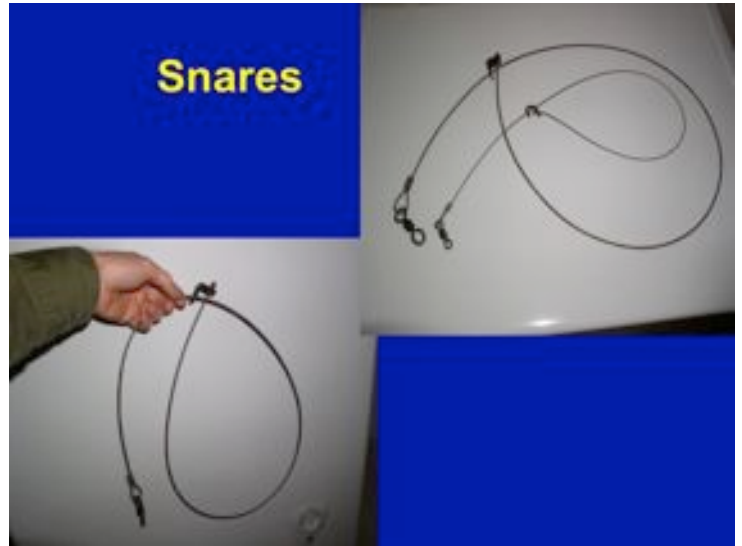
Effective

Disadvantages:

- Expensive ??
- Low Success In Forests Regions
- Hazardous



Snares



Questions?

Trapping Tips

Small traps vs large traps

Target juveniles for population reduction

Multiple traps

Pre-bait/Monitor

Vary baits

Fall/Winter

Don't give up!



What are some good baits to attract feral hogs to traps?

- Corn and milo
- Horse and mule feed
- Strawberry flavored jello
- All of the above



HOG BAIT RECIPE

- * 40-50 gallon metal trash can
- * 150 pounds of corn
- * 8 pounds of sugar
- * 1 packet of yeast
- * Fill can with water 3-4" above corn
- * Place trash can in direct sunlight-1 to 3 weeks
- * Optional: 5 packets of grape, strawberry or raspberry flavored Jello

OTHER BAITS

- Corn/milo/rice fermented in water/beer/milk
- Used fish grease or sardines and corn
- Bread fermented in water or beer
- Spoiled produce
- Dry dog food
- Commercial baits
- Ripe fruit (peaches, bananas or plums)
- Cheese-based catfish baits
- "Freshen" other baits with berry spray



Rooter Gates



Router Gate Triggers













Successful Trapping

- Match trap size to hog numbers
- Use small (4" x 4") mesh, 5' tall, cover corners
- Pre-bait, Pre-bait, Pre-bait !!!!!
- Monitor via camera
- Can we out smart them?









Welder Wildlife Foundation

Excluding Hogs from Feeders



How High is High Enough to
Exclude Hogs but Allow Deer Access?





Keep these guys out →

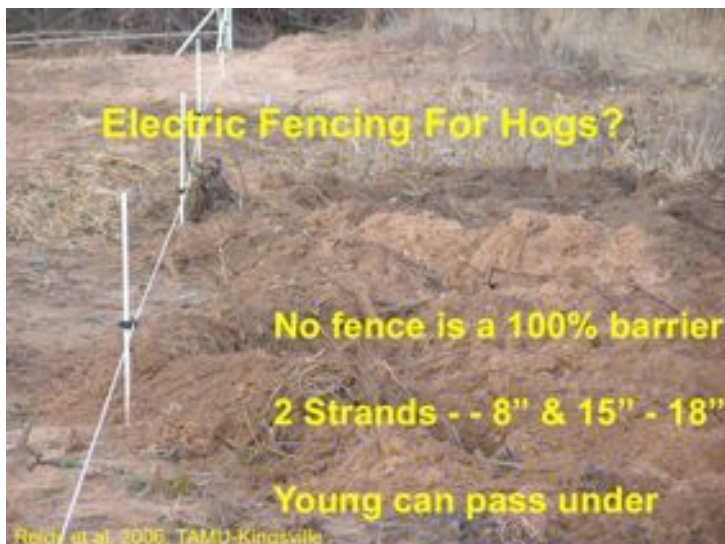
*20" let big hogs in
*28" and 34" heights excluded all hogs



← But let these guys in!

*6-16' panels requires 12 t-posts and creates a 28' diameter circle
*\$175 per feeder





Should you stock feral hogs on your property?

- a. Absolutely
- b. Absolutely not
- c. Only if you want to win the admiration of surrounding landowners

A website on all you want to know about feral hogs and their control can be accessed at:

<http://feralhog.tamu.edu>

True
or
False?

BONUS QUESTION:

What is a family group of feral swine called?

Sounder

93 Hogs !

So What Do We Do??

- Trap/Snare/Shoot Efficiently on a Sustained Basis
- Work Cooperatively With Neighbors
- Don't Stock Hogs!!!!
- Private Assistance
- Public Assistance

AgriLife Research and Extension Center at Overton





Questions?