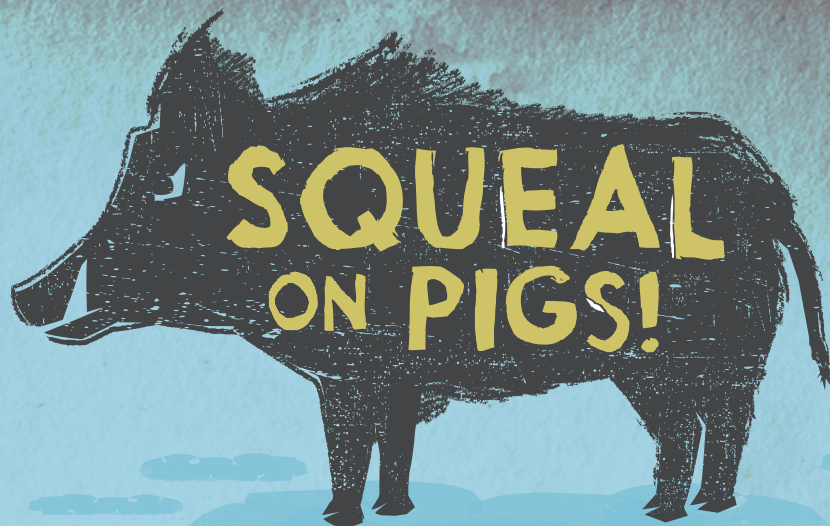


FERAL SWINE FACT SHEET



WHAT ARE THEY?

While feral pigs may look similar to domestic pigs, they are much more destructive. Over time, some have escaped or were released intentionally, creating free-ranging feral swine populations. Prolific breeders, they can produce four to eight babies per litter. Feral swine are highly adaptable, but prefer habitats with an abundant supply of water and dense cover. They are aggressive and pose serious ecological, economic, and health threats.

Species like the Russian or European boar were brought to the United States as domestic pigs from Europe and Asia and are considered the traditional species of feral pigs. Both species, as well as hybrids thereof are prohibited species under Administrative Rule of Montana (ARM).

Domestic swine species can also revert to a feral state in just a few generations. Because of this, Montana's laws pertaining defining feral swine do not include a phenotypic or genotypic definition. Instead feral swine in Montana includes any hog, boar, or pig that appears to be untamed, undomesticated, or in a wild state or appears to be contained for commercial hunting or trapping.

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF FERAL SWINE IN MONTANA?

The 2015 Legislature gave authority over the control of feral swine to the Department of Livestock. Since that time, DOL has worked closely with Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks, the United States Department of Agriculture's Wildlife Services, and the Montana Invasive Species Council on preventing their introduction into Montana.

WHY ARE FERAL SWINE PROHIBITED IN MONTANA?

Because of the invasive and destructive nature of feral swine and the potential for feral swine to carry and spread disease to domestic pigs, other livestock, wildlife, and people, DOL worked with FWP, USDA-WS, and industry to pass laws prohibiting their presence in Montana. The laws were written recognizing the hunting constituency that rapidly builds after feral swine are established and the difficulty in eradicating populations once established.

ARE THEY HERE YET?

No. The Montana Department of Livestock (DOL) has been working in partnership with Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks (FWP) and the United States Department of Agriculture's Wildlife Services (USDA-WS) to respond to reports of feral swine in Montana. Since the prohibition was passed by the 2015 Montana Legislature, DOL receives 1-2 reports of possible sightings of feral swine in Montana. These reports include feral swine imported from Texas for hunting purposes, sightings by hunters along river bottoms, and reports from landowners along Montana's highline. A report of a feral swine population in north central Montana in January 2018 resulted in 13 ½ flight hours looking for evidence of feral swine in the area. Fortunately, nothing was found.



IF YOU THINK YOU SEE A FERAL PIG CALL:

406-444-2976

PROTECT MONTANA FROM FERAL PIGS



SQUEALONPIGSMT.COM

FERAL SWINE FACT SHEET

WHY SHOULD I CARE?

Feral swine are aggressive animals that can be extremely destructive to fields, fences, and facilities. Their wallows can affect ponds and wetlands, muddying the water and destroying aquatic vegetation. They can strip a field of crops in one night and pose a threat to ground nesting birds and some endangered species. Feral swine also can transmit diseases and parasites, such as pseudorabies, brucellosis, and tuberculosis, to livestock and people.

HOW CAN WE STOP THEM?

Feral swine are considered illegal under state law. The following actions are prohibited in the State of Montana:

- Importing, transporting, or possessing live feral swine
- Intentionally, knowingly, or negligently allowing swine to live in a feral state
- Hunting, trapping, or killing feral swine
- Assisting in hunting, trapping, or killing of feral swine
- Intentionally feeding feral swine
- Expanding the range of feral swine
- Profiting from the release, hunting, trapping, or killing of feral swine.



The law also includes penalties for violations. These include fines up to \$10,000 per violation and repayment of costs incurred in the eradication of feral swine.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I SEE ONE?

Report it to the Squeal on Pigs hotline at 406-444-2976. The eradication of feral swine in Montana is restricted to the following groups:

- Employees of the Department of Livestock
- Other state or federal employees designated by the DOL

A private landowner or lessee that encounters feral swine on their land or land under their control when: the animals pose an immediate danger to persons or property, or the animals will expand their range without immediate eradication. In this instance, the individual is responsible for notifying DOL within 24 hours.

WHAT ARE THEIR CHARACTERISTICS?

- Feral pigs exhibit wide variation in color and size.
- Their hair is coarse with long bristles, and the color ranges from black, gray, brown, blonde, or red to spotted combinations.

Generally, they are black.

- The tail is moderately long, with sparse hair.
- The average female weighs between 77-330 pounds. The average wild boar weighs from 130-440 pounds.
- The elongated snout is flattened on the end, and is tough and flexible. The males have four tusks that grow continually and can be extremely sharp. The upper tusks are as much as 3-5 inches long, and usually are worn or broken from use.

WHERE DO I GET MORE INFORMATION?

- U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Library
- USDA APHIS national feral swine damage and management program
- Feral Swine Resources and Outreach Materials
- Montana Field Guide
- Squeal on Pigs prevention and reporting campaign squealonpigsmt.com



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