

# Guideline

## for the management of feral pigs (*Sus scrofa*)

### Purpose and scope

This guideline has been prepared under section 15 of the *Land Protection (Pest and Stock Route Management) Act 2002* (Qld) to support successful management of feral pigs, declared as a Class 2 pest. It sets out an objective, and statutory and non-statutory actions which are consistent with the eight principles of pest management listed in section 9 of the Act.

### Operational objective

- To eradicate small, isolated or new feral pig infestations.
- To reduce feral pig numbers in other situations, particularly where they have or could have significant economic, environmental or social impacts.

### Definition

A feral pig is one that has all of the following features:

- an elongated snout
- long coarse hair
- sloping hindquarters.

### Operational actions

#### 1. Integration

- Incorporate feral pig management into related planning and management programs.

#### 2. Public awareness

- Raise public awareness of the impacts of feral pigs, and the techniques and strategies for their management.
- Ensure the public is aware that it is illegal to feed (s. 40), keep (s. 41), release (s. 42), or supply (s. 44) feral pigs without a permit.

#### 3. Commitment

- Enforce compliance when landowners do not take reasonable steps to contribute to feral pig control.

#### 4. Consultation and partnership

- Build working partnerships between key stakeholders, including landowners, harvesters, and conservation groups to generate a holistic approach to feral pig management and a sense of community ownership of the problem.

#### 5. Planning

- Refer for additional guidance to the *Queensland Feral Pig Management Strategy* and the draft *Threat Abatement Plan for the Predation, Habitat Degradation, Competition and Disease Transmission by Feral Pigs*.

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- Map the extremities of feral pig infestations.
- Ensure that feral pig management plans are consistent with plans in neighbouring areas.
- Secure adequate resources (i.e. time, funds and personnel) to carry out the actions in this guideline.

## 6. Prevention

- Prohibit the keeping (s. 41), release (s. 42), and sale or other supply (s. 44) of feral pigs, except under permit.
- Encourage the responsible keeping and transport of feral pigs under permit.
- Eradicate small, isolated feral pig populations on islands.

## 7. Best practice

- Distribute feral pig best practice information to land managers and game meat harvesters.
- Apply integrated management to reduce feral pig numbers, particularly where they have or could have an impact on environmentally significant areas, primary industries, or human health (including places such as ports and refuse sites where there is a high risk of disease transmission).
- Encourage responsible commercial harvesting as a means of suppressing feral pig numbers.

## 8. Improvement

- Develop best practice methods for the control of feral pigs in the dry tropics.
- Develop alternative feral pig control toxins and target specific systems for their delivery.
- Conduct research on the ecology of feral pigs in the Wet Tropics regions, including their role in weed dispersal.
- Develop trapping strategies for feral pigs in the Wet Tropics regions.

## Background

Early settlers introduced domestic pigs to Australia, and subsequent accidental and deliberate releases resulted in the establishment of feral populations. In Queensland, the greatest concentration of feral pigs occurs on the large drainage basins and swamp areas of the coast and inland. Feral pigs are suited to a range of habitats but prefer dense cover for protection from the sun and from predators (including humans).

Feral pigs are omnivorous, opportunistic feeders. They kill and eat lambs, damage pasture and crops by grazing, trampling, and uprooting the ground, and damage stored grain facilities, fence lines and watering points. They are carriers of endemic diseases such as leptospirosis, Q fever, brucellosis, and sparganosis, and are also susceptible to a wide range of exotic diseases and could act as reservoirs or vectors should these diseases enter Australia. Feral pigs have a significant impact on the natural environment through wallowing, grazing, rooting and predation.

Poisoning and trapping are the most effective control techniques. Small isolated populations of pigs may be removed by shooting from the ground or from helicopters and/or by the use of dogs to flush them from their cover. However, control is difficult for several reasons:

- Pigs are intelligent, adaptable and secretive.
- Breeding occurs year-round under favourable conditions.
- Commitment to control varies.

## Responsibility

**Landowners:** destruction and control of pest animals.

**Local governments:** compliance, surveillance, local planning, mapping, and raising awareness.

**DEEDI:** statewide planning, mapping, coordination, raising awareness, and research.

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## References

*Feral Pigs in Queensland*, Pest risk assessment available at [www.dpi.qld.gov.au](http://www.dpi.qld.gov.au)

Standing Committee on Agriculture and Animal Health Committee 1997, *Model Code of Practice for the Land Transport of Pigs*, CSIRO, available at [www.publish.csiro.au/pid/1502.htm](http://www.publish.csiro.au/pid/1502.htm)

Standing Committee on Agriculture and Animal Health Committee 1992, *Model Code of Practice for the Welfare of Animals: Feral Livestock Animals*, CSIRO, available at [www.publish.csiro.au/pid/370.htm](http://www.publish.csiro.au/pid/370.htm)

Standing Committee on Agriculture and Animal Health Committee 1998, *Model Code of Practice for the Welfare of Animals: Pigs*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn, CSIRO, available at [www.publish.csiro.au/pid/5698.htm](http://www.publish.csiro.au/pid/5698.htm)

Control of feral pigs fact sheet available at [www.dpi.qld.gov.au](http://www.dpi.qld.gov.au)

Feral pig control in the wet tropics available at [www.dpi.qld.gov.au](http://www.dpi.qld.gov.au)

Feral pigs in Queensland fact sheet available at [www.dpi.qld.gov.au](http://www.dpi.qld.gov.au)

*Queensland Feral Pig Management Strategy*, available at [www.dpi.qld.gov.au](http://www.dpi.qld.gov.au)

Threatened Species Scientific Committee 2003, *Threat Abatement Plan for the Predation, Habitat Degradation, Competition and Disease Transmission by Feral Pigs*, Department of Environment and Heritage, available at [www.ea.gov.au/biodiversity/threatened](http://www.ea.gov.au/biodiversity/threatened).

## Map

- Feral pig distribution, available at [www.dpi.qld.gov.au](http://www.dpi.qld.gov.au) > Biosecurity > Weeds, pest animals and ants > Pest Mapping > Annual pest distribution maps > search for a map > select Pig or Feral pig species.

The maps are updated as new information becomes available, and the latest maps must be accessed from the website.

**Date of approval:** February 2004