



CANADIAN
WILDLIFE HEALTH
COOPERATIVE

THE WILD BOAR

CREATING A WORLD
THAT IS SAFE AND SUSTAINABLE
FOR WILDLIFE AND SOCIETY



NOT JUST a pretty face

Wild boar were imported into Canada as part of the expansion and diversification of the specialized livestock industry in the 1980s and 90s. Unfortunately, wild boar often escaped from farms or were intentionally released for hunting, resulting in feral populations that are now well established in many parts of Canada. Wild boar can be very destructive and disruptive in ecosystems to which they are not native. Examples of the damage they inflict include predation of eggs of ground nesting birds and disruption of crops and native vegetation due to their wallowing and rooting behaviors. They are also carriers of diseases infectious to wildlife, domestic animals and people. In the United States, where feral pigs and wild boar are abundant and widespread, the cost of damage and associated control programs is estimated to be in excess of 1 billion dollars annually.

In the United States wild boar are reservoirs for a number of important diseases including:

Brucellosis

- A bacterial disease causing “undulant fever” in humans and abortion and infertility in animals.
- A serious problem in many parts of the world where wild boar are feral.
- A reportable disease that can result in trade sanctions and significant economic costs.
- Has caused disease in hunters.

Pseudorabies virus

- A herpesvirus of pigs that can be transmitted to a number of species.
- Disease generally most severe in young pigs and carrier status in adults common.
- Can infect livestock and in dogs causes death preceded by signs similar to rabies, hence its name pseudorabies.

Trichinellosis

- A parasitic disease affecting the muscle of wild boar and a number of other species, including humans.
- People consuming wild boar meat, including some from Canada have contracted this disease.

In Saskatchewan, feral wild boar are found scattered throughout the southern half of the province. Wild boar have one of the highest reproductive rates of any large mammal in the world and therefore it is important that culling efforts are undertaken immediately to eradicate this invasive species. Limited testing of feral wild boar from Saskatchewan has determined they have been exposed to an important bacteria of domestic pigs *Actinobacillus pleuropneumoniae*. Interestingly, the strain of *A. pleuropneumoniae* found has not been previously reported in North America.

YOU CAN help

The Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture and Ministry of Environment, along with the Canadian Wildlife Health Cooperative are interested in reports of feral wild boar occurrences and in obtaining samples for disease testing. If you hunt or cull wild boar contact the CWHC at 1-888-966-5815 or westernnorthern@cwhe-rcsf.ca and we can provide you with a simple sampling kit to assist in this work.

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