

Feral Pig Communication Plan

Introduction

This plan provides guidance on feral pigs, a regulated pest in Saskatchewan, to appointed pest control officers (PCOs), municipalities (as defined in *The Municipalities Act*, *The Cities Act*, and *The Northern Municipalities Act, 2010*), owners or occupants of land, industry stakeholders, producer groups and the public. It outlines key information on detection, regulatory guidelines, management practices and a response plan.

Legislative Authority

- [The Plant Health Act](#)
- [The Plant Health Regulations](#)

Related Legislation

- [The Animal Production Act](#) and [The Animal Production Regulations](#)
- [The Wildlife Act, 1998](#) and [The Wildlife Regulations, 1981](#)

Overview

Feral pigs according to *The Plant Health Act* and *The Plant Health Regulations* refer to free-living members of the family Suidae which includes any species of pigs, boars, hogs or hybrids that are free-roaming and feral. Feral pigs are an invasive species and represent a threat to the agricultural industry. These animals can be destructive, causing severe damage to crop, riparian areas and other natural habitats through behaviors such as digging, rooting and wallowing. In addition, they are known to harass livestock and wildlife.

Feral pigs are potential reservoirs for livestock diseases such as African swine fever (ASF), a federally reportable disease not yet present in North America. ASF is a serious threat to the Canadian pork industry as a single positive case of ASF can have huge economic and trade impacts. Feral pigs can also spread other diseases such as *Actinobacillus pleuropneumoniae*, *Toxoplasma*, porcine reproductive and respiratory syndrome virus, Influenza A, transmissible gastroenteritis virus and porcine circovirus. These pathogens have potential consequences for wild and domestic animals as well as human health.

Stray or escaped domestic pigs and escaped farmed wild boars may contribute to feral pig populations if they are not promptly recaptured (Figure 3). Notification and due diligence are required under other legislation, *The Animal Production Act* and *The Animal Production Regulations*, before stray or escaped domestic pigs and escaped farmed wild boars can be deemed feral.



Figure 1. Feral pig

Photo credit: Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources



Figure 2. Feral pig rooting damage

Photo credit: Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation

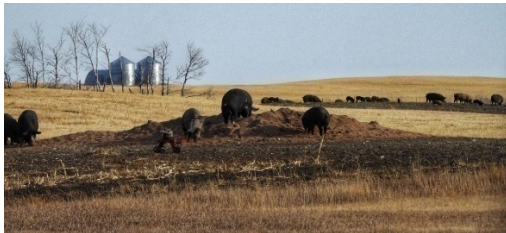


Figure 3. Escaped domestic pigs may contribute to feral pig populations

Spread and Control

The feral pig population in Saskatchewan is largely concentrated within two small areas of the province. They typically inhabit wetlands, such as large sloughs or small self-contained waterbodies where dense cover and food sources like cattail roots can support their survival. Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation (SCIC) administers Saskatchewan's [Feral Wild Boar Control](#) initiatives through the Wildlife Damage Compensation Program. Surveillance data between 2020 to 2024 show ongoing management efforts of SCIC, combined with the harsh winter climate in Saskatchewan, have reduced the population. Since 2017, over 1,000 animals have been removed from the landscape.

When a feral pig is reported, SCIC coordinates qualified hunters and trappers, with permission of the owner or occupant of the land, to investigate sightings and take appropriate control actions. Experience in other jurisdictions shows removing individual feral pigs through sport hunting has little impact on the population. In fact, it breaks up sounders (groups of females and their young) causing them to scatter and reproduce to replace losses and evade hunters, making control efforts more difficult. Effective management involves identifying and eliminating entire sounders, which requires dedicated wildlife professionals with specialized techniques.

In addition to coordinating removal efforts, SCIC provides compensation for crop or livestock damage caused by feral pigs. Under the Wildlife Damage Compensation Program, Saskatchewan producers can receive up to 100 per cent compensation for damage caused by feral pigs. They do not have to be existing SCIC customers to qualify for compensation. Once damage is detected, it needs to be reported immediately by calling 1-833-PIG-SPOT, emailing customer.service@scic.ca or visiting <https://www.scic.ca/wildlife-damage/program-overview/feral-wild-boar-control-program>.

Regulatory Guidelines

Since 2022, feral pigs have been declared and regulated pests in Saskatchewan. Under *The Plant Health Act* (Act) and *The Plant Health Regulations* (regulations), key provisions include:

Authority and Enforcement

- Municipalities may appoint any person they consider qualified to serve as a PCO to enforce the Act and the regulations within the municipality.
 - A municipality-appointed PCO can enter any land or premises (excluding dwelling houses) to investigate pest infestations, collect samples and enforce the Act with agreements and orders (when necessary), in collaboration with the SCIC.
- Confirmed presence of feral pigs must be reported to SCIC immediately, as well as to the municipality.
 - SCIC is authorized via a licence from the Ministry of Environment to bait and trap feral wild boar, both of which are prohibited under Section 18.1(1.1) (a) and Section 7(1) of *The Wildlife Regulations, 1981*.
 - If enforcement becomes necessary, in collaboration with SCIC, a PCO may issue an agreement or order that specifies appropriate control methods SCIC will use. In the case of an order, it may also include restrictions or other terms and conditions as outlined in the regulations.
- SCIC is also an authorized organization as per Section 3 (4) of the Act. This allows them to conduct surveillance, sampling and control feral pigs and suspect sightings with the permission of the owner or occupant of land.
 - SCIC will notify the Ministry of Agriculture and municipality of the confirmed presence of the pest.
 - If the animal is deemed to be a stray or escaped domestic swine through surveillance activities, SCIC and/or the PCO should contact the municipality office to proceed with the stray animal process.
 - If the animal is deemed to be an escaped farmed wild boar through surveillance activities, SCIC and/or the PCO should contact the Ministry of Agriculture game farm investigator, 306-787-2150.
- Every owner or occupant of land is required to control (through SCIC), prevent and report declared pests. Feral pig sightings should be reported to SCIC (preferred), municipality, PCO or Ministry of Agriculture immediately. Municipalities should submit an annual pest report to the Ministry of Agriculture (crops@gov.sk.ca) by December 31 of each year.
- If the minister is satisfied that a pest or nuisance pest emergency exists or may exist, the Minister may, by order, make an emergency declaration for rapid response and biosecurity measures. During the declared emergency period, authorized persons do not require permission from the owner or occupant.
- **Report sightings to SCIC:**
 - SCIC online reporting page: <https://www.scic.ca/wildlife-damage/program-overview/feral-wild-boar-control-program/report-feral-wild-boar>
 - Additional methods include:
 - SCIC PIG SPOT Hotline: 1-833-PIG-SPOT (1-833-744-7768)
 - SCIC Customer Service email: customer.service@scic.ca
 - Any SCIC customer service office or Ministry of Agriculture Regional Services Branch office.

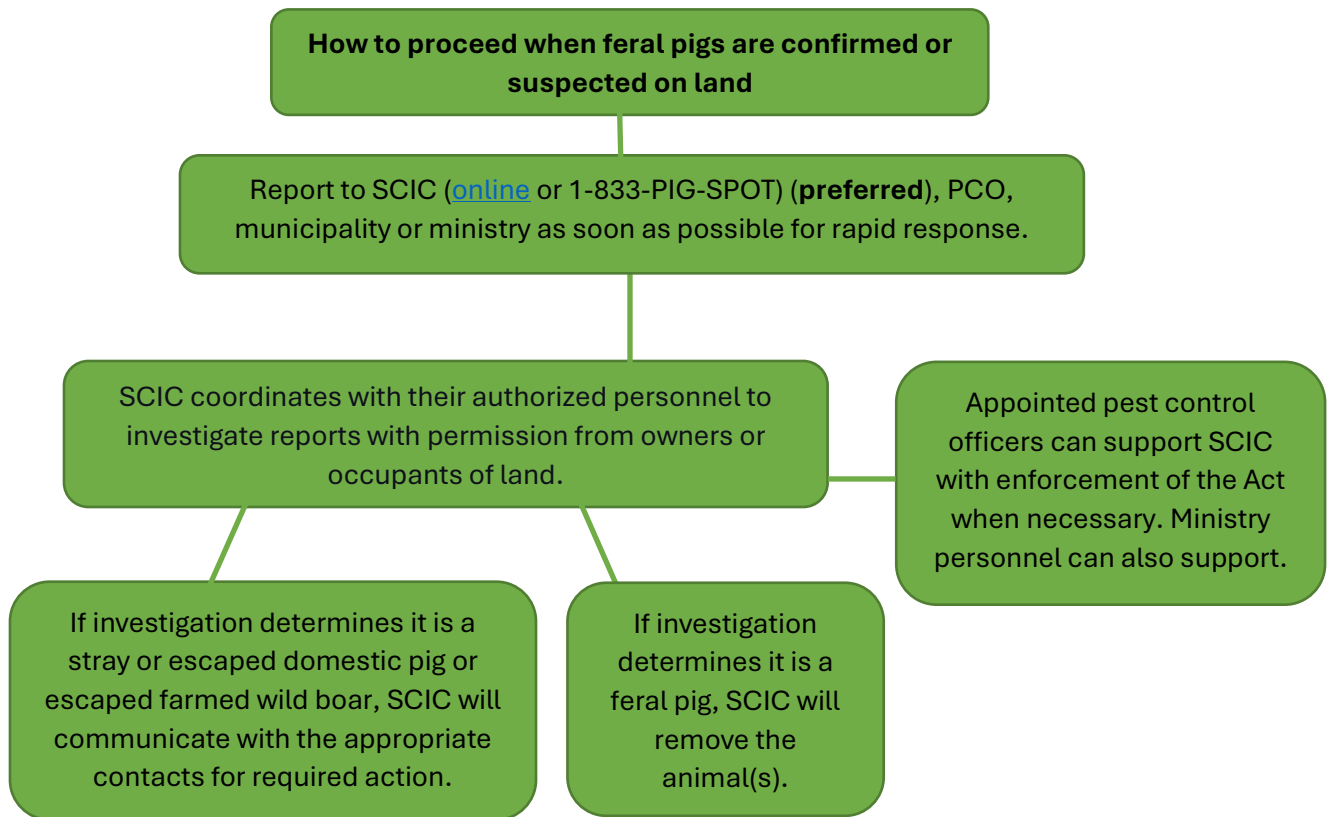


Best Practices for Prevention and Management

- Producers and landowners or occupants should be alert for signs of feral pigs and promptly report confirmed or suspected sightings to SCIC (**preferred**), municipality, PCO or Ministry of Agriculture for timely surveillance and control.
- Swine producers should develop and maintain an on-farm biosecurity plan to prevent pest introduction, minimize losses, etc. For guidance, refer to the [The Plant Health Act and The Plant Health Regulations webpage](#).

Response Plan

A response plan is designed to enable rapid and effective action when a pest outbreak occurs. As mentioned in the previous sections, the following steps summarize the recommended procedures to follow when feral pigs are confirmed or suspected on land.



Emergency Response Coordination

In a plant health emergency:

- The Ministry of Agriculture leads the response, in collaboration with municipalities and other plant health partners.

Responsibilities

Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture, Crops and Irrigation Branch

- Administer legislation and regulations related to feral pigs as a declared pest.
- Compile and distribute the feral pig communication plan.
- Support and stay informed on current research and strategies to control feral pigs.
- Provide education and outreach to producers, owners or occupants of land and industry on the importance of reporting and eradicating feral pigs.
- Report confirmed or suspected feral pig sightings to SCIC for investigation.
- Support SCIC, when necessary, in the investigation and control of feral pigs.

- Collaborate with other jurisdictions, including municipalities and stakeholder groups to guide control strategies and monitoring of feral pigs.

Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation

- Responsible for delivering the [Feral Wild Boar Control](#) initiatives which operates within Wildlife Damage Compensation Program.
- Provide compensation for crop or livestock damage caused by the pest under the Wildlife Damage Compensation Program.
- Collaborate with other jurisdictions, including stakeholder groups to guide control strategies and monitoring of feral pigs.
- As an authorized organization, conduct surveillance, sampling and control feral pigs with the permission of the owner or occupant of land.

Municipalities and Pest Control Officers (PCOs)

- Municipalities may appoint PCOs who, as part of their duties, are required to report confirmed sightings of feral pigs to SCIC and the municipality.
 - Municipalities and PCOs should follow *The Animal Production Act* and *The Animal Production Regulations* under the section *Related Legislation* if the animal is not feral.
- PCOs may enforce the Act, including issuing orders or entering agreements with owners or occupants of land to control, destroy and prevent the spread of declared pests like feral pigs.
- Collaborate with SCIC and the Ministry of Agriculture on any necessary investigation and control strategies.
- Municipalities should submit an annual pest report to the Ministry of Agriculture (crops@gov.sk.ca) by December 31 of each year.

Producers

- Implement strong biosecurity practices.
- Report any suspected or confirmed feral pig sightings to SCIC ([online](#) or 1-833-PIG-SPOT), municipality, appointed PCO or Ministry of Agriculture immediately.
- Comply with any orders issued by a PCO to support the efforts of SCIC to control, destroy and prevent the spread of feral pigs.

Producer Groups - Saskatchewan Pork Development Board and Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan

- Promote best practices in alignment with the feral pig communication plan.
- Raise awareness among members and stakeholders of the risks of feral pigs and the importance of timely reporting.
- Report suspected or confirmed feral pig sightings to SCIC.
- Collaborate with government agencies to support coordinated response efforts when needed.

Contacts

For questions about feral pigs and management practices, contact:

- Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation (SCIC) - 1-833-PIG-SPOT (1-833-744-7768).
- Provincial specialist, insect and pest management, Ministry of Agriculture - 306-787-4669.

For questions on legislation and regulatory guidelines regarding feral pigs, contact:

- Provincial specialist, pest regulatory, Ministry of Agriculture - 306-787-7474.

Related Legislation

*Note: The following legislation is complementary to **The Plant Health Act**. It is intended to provide additional information.*

[*The Animal Production Act*](#) and [*The Animal Production Regulations*](#)

- Administered by the Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock Branch.
- Regulation definition: **s. 1-2 “wild boar”** means as a member of the *Sus scrofa scrofa* subspecies, including those commonly known as wild boar, European boar, Russian Boar, old world swine, iron age pig, razorback and any crossbred animal that has an ancestor within and including four generations that was an individual of the subspecies.
- Wild boar farms require a license to operate. Licensed wild boar farm operators are required to prevent animals from escaping, taking immediate action if an animal does escape (including notifying the Ministry of Agriculture’s Game Farm Investigators).
- Municipalities have the authority to handle stray animal incidents, including domestic swine.

[*The Wildlife Act, 1998*](#) and [*The Wildlife Regulations, 1981*](#)

- Administered by the Saskatchewan Ministry of Environment.
- *The Wildlife Regulations, 1981* apply to feral or free-living wild boar only, defined as a member of the *Sus scrofa scrofa* subspecies that is not contained within a lawful fence or under the immediate, continuous and effective control of its owner. As such, the regulations do not apply to feral domestic pigs or hybrids.
- No person shall, without a license, at any time hunt with, use or set any poison, traps, nets or snares for the destruction or capture of wild boar.
- No person shall place bait for the purpose of hunting wild boar.
- In Saskatchewan, residents may hunt wild boar without a license under certain provisions. This method is discouraged as it can scatter the feral pigs and complicate removal; all sightings should be reported to SCIC who will follow-up with appropriate actions. Hunting within a wildlife management unit, provincial park, protected area, or recreation site requires a valid big game license for that area. Firearms may be used without a license to hunt wild boar only if the hunter is not assisting others in hunting big game, and the use of dogs for hunting wild boar is prohibited unless specifically licensed.

Resources

[National Swine Farm-Level Biosecurity Standard](#)

[Animal biosecurity - inspection.canada.ca](#)

[Swine - Animal Health and Biosecurity Producer Program](#)

[Feral Wild Boar Control Program | SCIC](#)

[Home | Wild Pigs Canada](#)

[Minimum containment standards for Alberta wild boar farms](#)

References

Note: The websites cited within the following references were accessed in December 2025

1. Animal Health Canada-Canadian Invasive Wild Pig Report. Website: [Link](#)
2. Canadian Wildlife Health Cooperative- Invasive Pigs. Website: [Link](#)