

A photograph of two wild boars in a forest. The boars have coarse, greyish-brown fur and are looking towards the camera. They are standing in front of a tree trunk, with a blurred background of green and yellow foliage. A small blue horizontal bar is visible in the top left corner of the image.

Update on the Alberta Wild Boar Control Program

Hannah Mckenzie

Wild Boar Specialist, Agriculture and Irrigation

Alberta

What's in a name? All *Sus scrofa*

Eurasian wild boar
(ancestor), razorback,
Old World swine



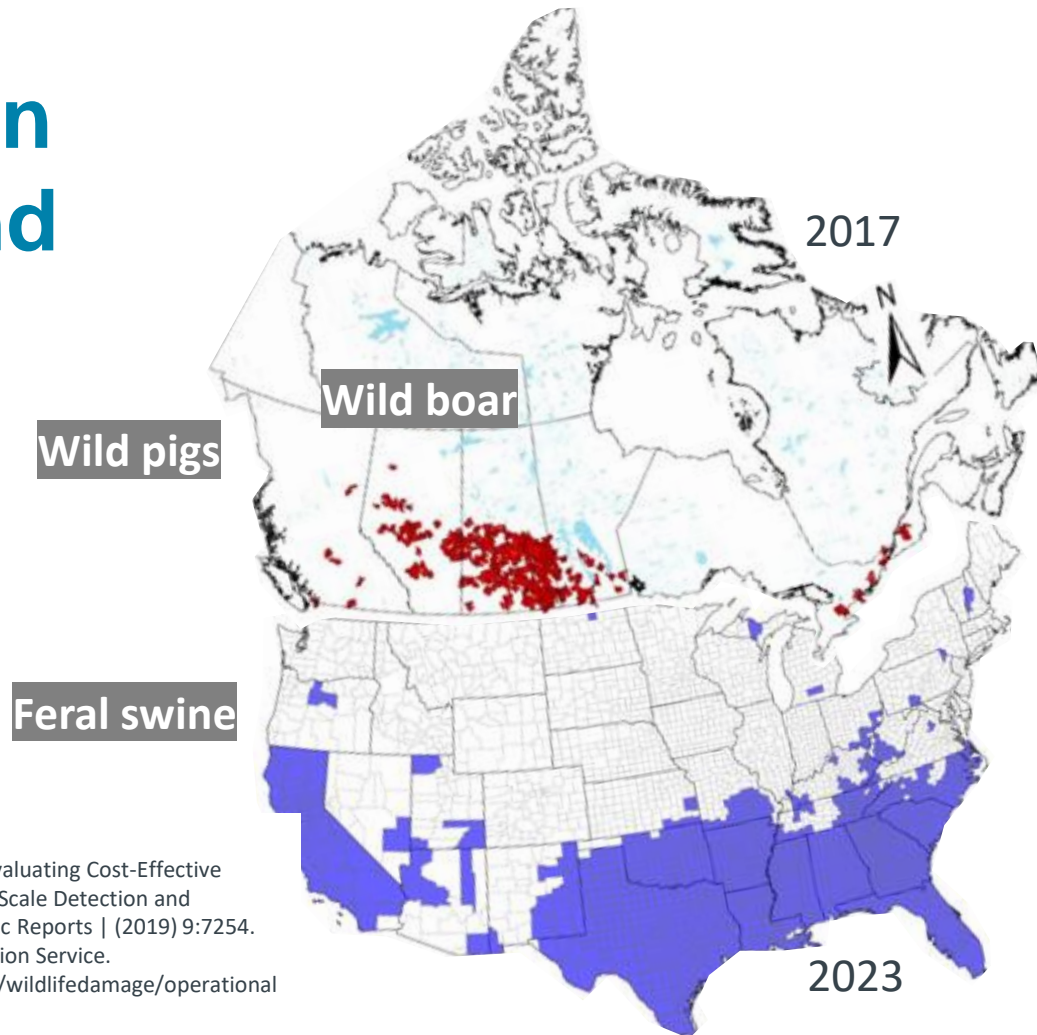
Eurasian wild boar
hybrids, feral swine



Domestic pigs (many breeds)



Wild pigs in Canada and the US



Sources:

Canada – Ruth A. Aschim & Ryan K. Brook. Evaluating Cost-Effective Methods for Rapid and Repeatable National Scale Detection and Mapping of Invasive Species Spread. Scientific Reports | (2019) 9:7254.

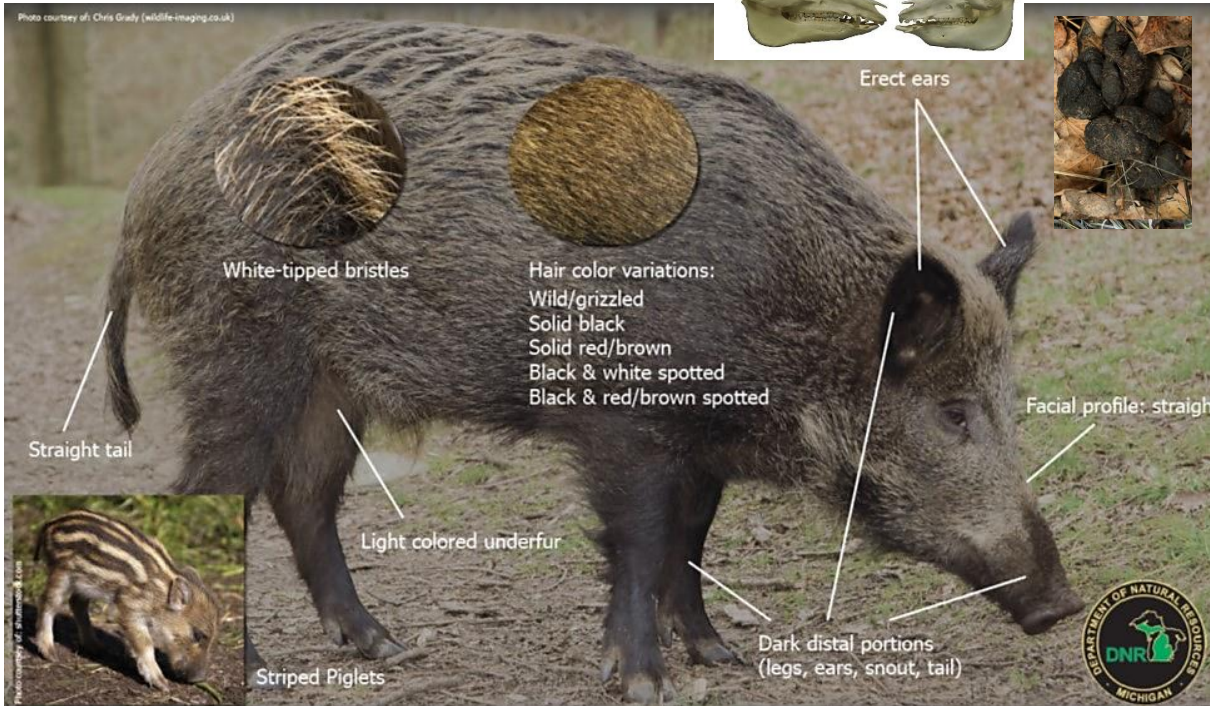
USA – USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

<https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/wildlifedamage/operational-activities/feral-swine/sa-fs-history>. 2023.

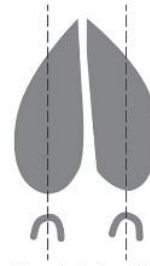
How to recognize wild boar and their sign



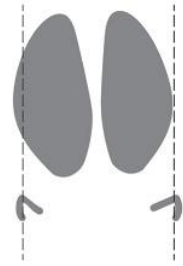
By Klaus Rassinger und Gerhard Cammerer, Museum Wiesbaden



Deer tracks are more heart shaped. When dew claws are visible, they are usually in line with the hoof print.



Wild pig tracks are rounder. When dew claws are visible, they usually appear off to the side of the hoof print.



Source: Alberta Agriculture | WP GRAPHIC



Wallowing



Rooting



Nests



Sandy Van Dijk

Wild boar are one of the **most damaging invasive species** in North America

Their rooting and wallowing damages habitat, destroys crops and degrades water quality.



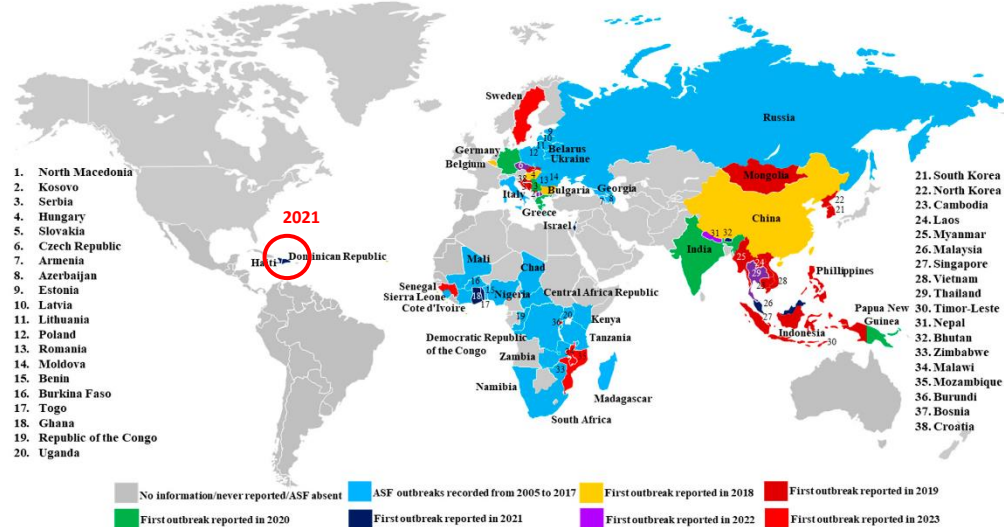
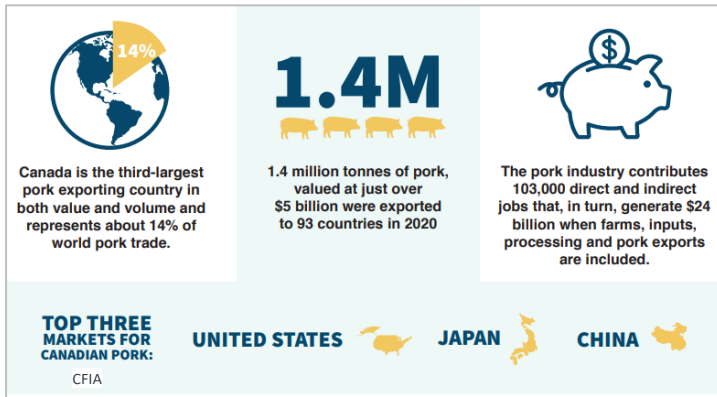
They compete with and eat our native wildlife.



They carry diseases, parasites, and transmit foodborne illnesses that affect people and animals.

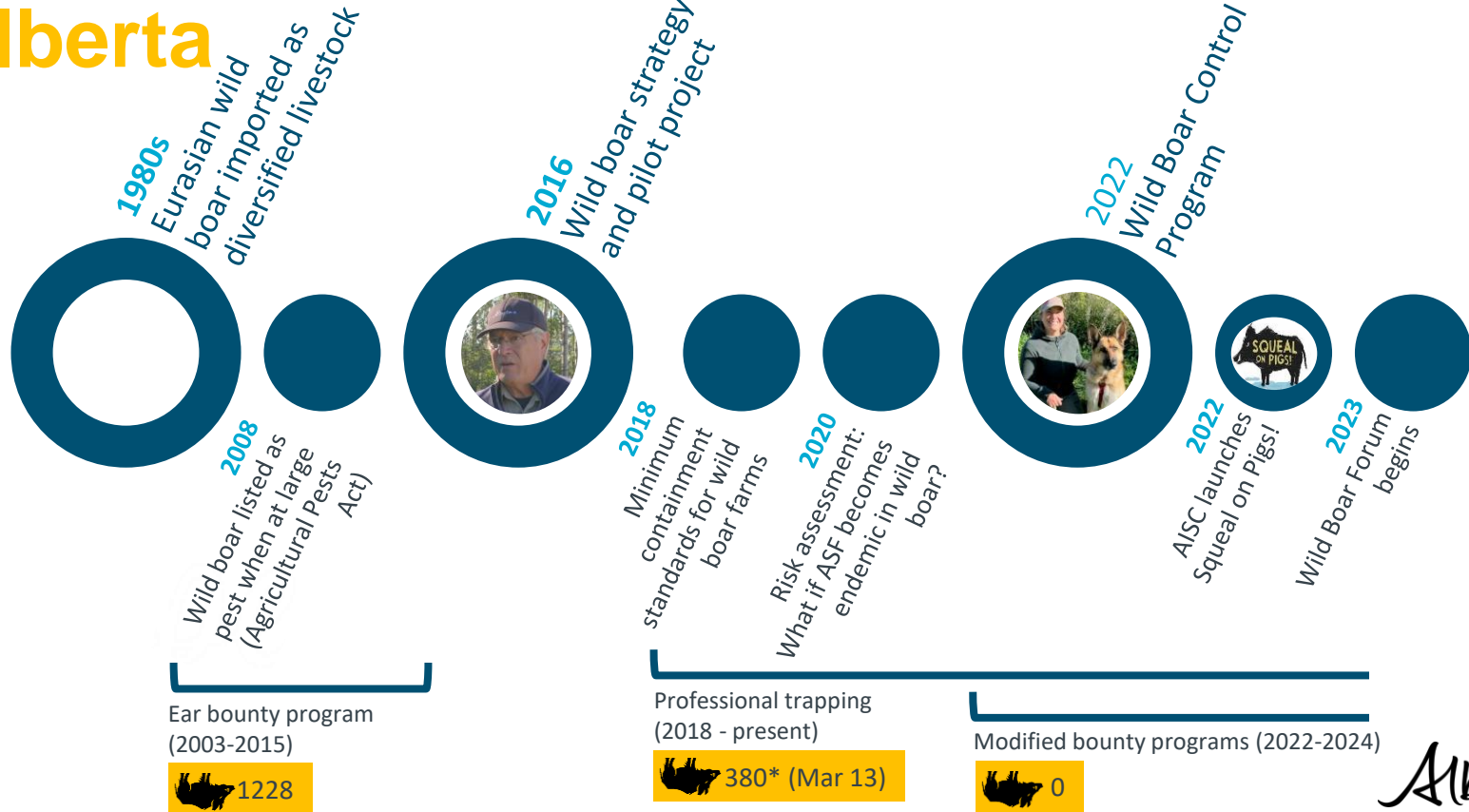
African swine fever

- Contagious viral disease that is deadly for pigs
- Wild boar could introduce, spread and maintain ASF



Wang L, Ganges L, Dixon LK, Bu Z, Zhao D, Truong QL, Richt JA, Jin M, Netherton CL, Benarafa C, et al. 2023 International African Swine Fever Workshop: Critical Issues That Need to Be Addressed for ASF Control. *Viruses*. 2024; 16(1):4. <https://doi.org/10.3390/v16010004>

History of wild boar management in Alberta



Wild boar: a pest when at large

- Landowners must actively prevent establishment, and control or destroy pests (*Agricultural Pests Act*)
- Legal to hunt wild boar
- Other applicable legislation
 - Firearm use (*Wildlife Act*)
 - Access (*Public Lands Act, Petty Trespass Act*)
 - Escaped domestic pigs (*Stray Animals Act*)

Alberta wild boar **strategic objectives**

- Prevent new introductions of wild boar
- Control/remove existing wild populations
- Support and participate in activities that fill knowledge gaps about wild boar in Alberta to improve decision-making
- Develop cooperative partnerships to reduce the risk and impacts of wild boar to agriculture, natural resources, and animal and human health





**SQUEAL
ON PIGS!**

Alberta Wild Boar Control Program

A coordinated approach to eliminating the threat of invasive wild boar

- Expanded monitoring and professional trapping
- Modified bounty (remuneration) programs
 - Ear Bounty, ended March 31, 2023
 - Whole Sounder Trapping Incentive, ending March 31, 2024
 - No returns*
- Crop insurance (AFSC)
 - No claims*
- Annual inspections of wild boar farms (~14 for meat production, hunting)
 - Minimum Containment Standards for Alberta Wild Boar Farms
- Squeal on Pigs! (Alberta Invasive Species Council)
- Wild Pig Project (Dr. Pruvot, UCalgary)
- African Swine Fever response preparedness





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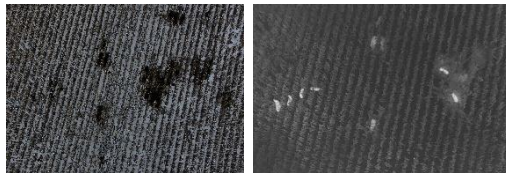
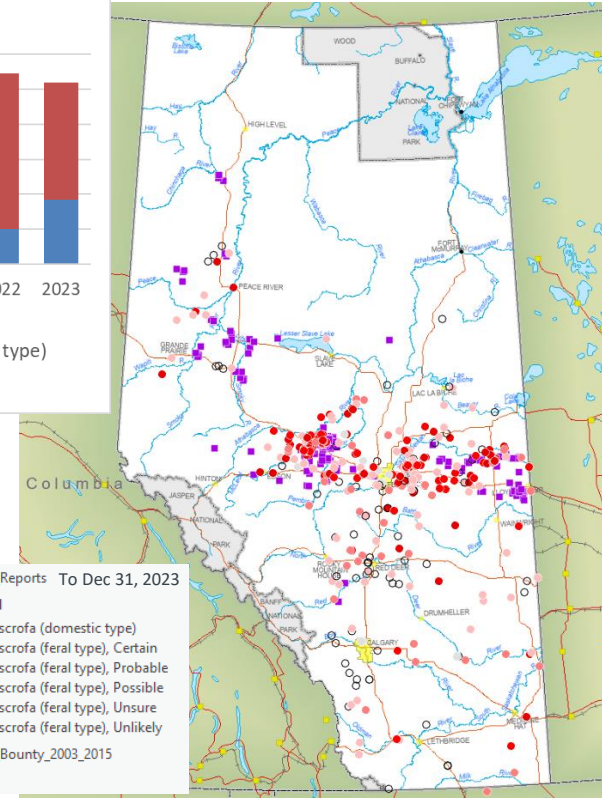
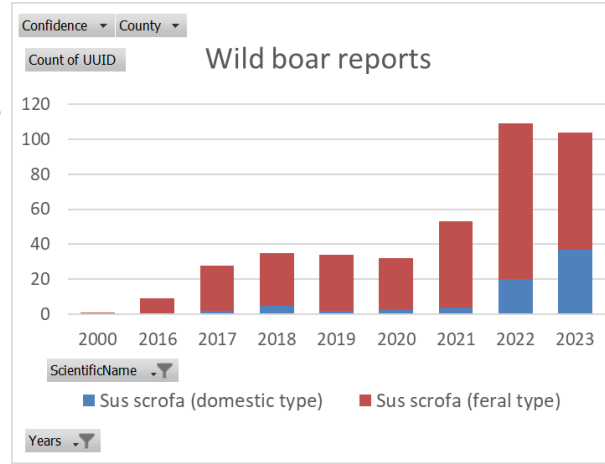
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Monitoring

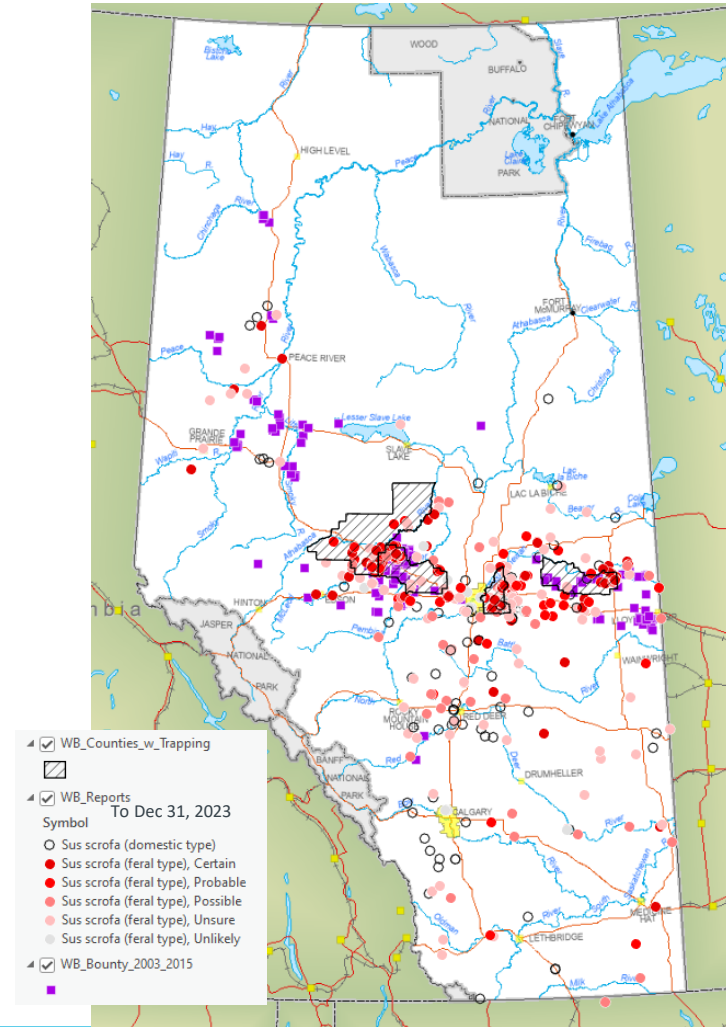
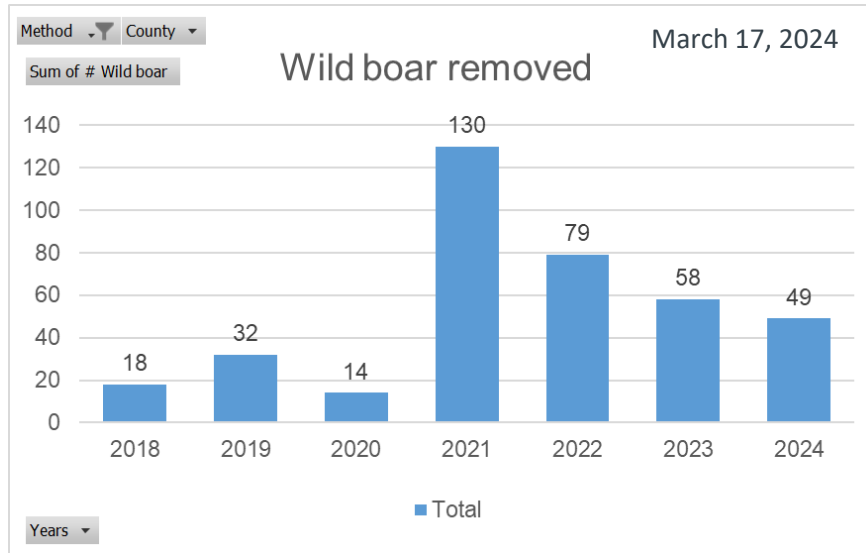
Where are they? How many are there? What is the population trajectory?

- Public reports
 - 310-FARM, wildboar@gov.ab.ca, alberta.ca/report-wild-boar, EDDMapS
 - All reports are investigate
- Remote cameras
 - Community based monitoring program for pork producers and pig owners (Alberta Pork)
 - Systematic camera grid (occupancy, trend)
- Thermal drone surveys
- eDNA (Alberta Pork, InnoTech Alberta)
- Scat detection dogs



Trapping

Removal of whole sounders by Alberta Pork eradication specialists using smart traps



Why whole sounder trapping?



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Ryan Brook

Tools for wild boar control

Currently in use

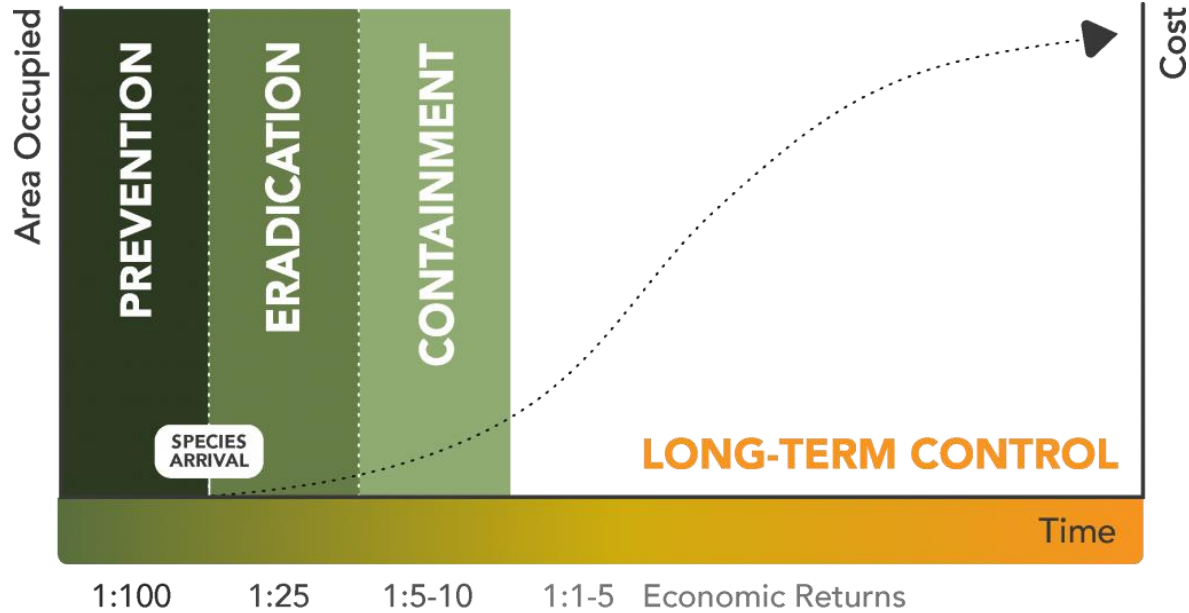
- Whole sounder trapping



Potential future options

- Different kinds of traps
- GPS collared wild boar
- Snaring
- Toxicants
- Contraception
- Ground or aerial shooting

Wild boar management along the invasion curve



Get your wild boar fix at the conference!

- Talks
 - Mapping Established Strongholds for Invasive Wild Pig Populations on the Canadian Prairies – *Ryan Brook*
- Posters
 - Understanding the Effects of Human Intervention on Wild Boar Ecology in Alberta – *Hannah Bordin and Mark Boyce*
 - Evaluating the Risks of Transboundary Movements of Invasive Wild Pigs at the Canada-United States Border: Implications for African Swine Fever Preparedness – *Ryan Brook*
 - Environmental DNA for the Detection of Wild Boar in Alberta – *Jim Davies, Susan Koziel, Jori Harrison, and Brian Eaton*
 - Spatial Ecology of Invasive Wild Boar (*Sus scrofa*) in Canada: Informing Population and Disease Control – *Devin Fitzpatrick and Mathieu Pruvot*
 - Surveillance of Circulating Infectious Disease on Free-Ranging Invasive Wild Boar in Alberta, Canada – *Oshin Ley Garcia, Checkley S, Van der Meer F, Liljebjelke K, Mainali C, Rothenburger J, McKenzie H, Pruvot M*
 - Seroprevalence of *Trichinella* in Alberta Wild Pigs – *Kiera Middel, Chunu Mainali and Darcy Visscher*
 - How close is too close? Wild Pig - Livestock Interactions and Infectious Disease Transmission – *Luis G. Salazar, Rob Deardon, Ryan Brook, Kim Pepin, Mathieu Pruvot*
- But wait, there's more! Meet Boris and K9 Seuss! Grab some Squeal on Pigs info!



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