

# QUICK FACTS

## WILD BOAR AT LARGE



Feral pigs, also known as wild boar at large, are one of the most damaging invasive species in North America. They cause damage to cropland, properties, and ecosystems. They can predate on livestock and have the potential to transfer disease to pigs, cattle, wildlife, and humans. Hunting is not an effective control option.

### SQUEAL ON PIGS!

Here's how you can help prevent the spread of wild boar at large:

1. **Squeal!** If you see wild boar at large or signs of their activity, report it to **310-FARM**, [wildboar@gov.ab.ca](mailto:wildboar@gov.ab.ca), your **local municipality**, or use the free **EDDMaps** smartphone app. If your crop has been damaged by wild boar, producers can be compensated through the Agriculture Financial Services Corporation's Wildlife Damage Compensation Program.
2. **DO NOT hunt wild boar at large!** This is NOT an effective control option. Although hunting may seem helpful, it has the opposite effect and allows populations to expand and exacerbate impacts. These animals are smart and quickly learn avoidance techniques, such as becoming nocturnal, that they pass on to their young.
3. **Know the law!** Wild boar are listed as an agricultural pest under the Agricultural Pests Act when at large. Existing wild boar farms must comply with the Wild Boar Containment Standards, which provide enhanced fencing requirements to prevent escape.





Rooting along edge of a crop field



Wild boar tracks & hair on barbed wire



Wild boar at large, *Sus scrofa*

## WILD BOAR AT LARGE QUICK FACTS:

- Wild boar are native to Europe and Asia and were introduced to Canada as livestock. Some have escaped and established wild populations.
- Wild boar at large weigh between 45-150 kg and have coarse gray to brown hair, sometimes with a tufted ridge along their backs. Tails are straight with a bushy tip. They have thick necks and large canine teeth or tusks visible when their mouth is closed.
- They are able to reproduce at young ages (between 5-12 months old) and can have 6 piglets at a time, sometimes twice a year.
- Common signs of wild boar at large include: trampled or destroyed crops, boar droppings, hair on barbwire, digging (rooting) or rolling around (wallowing), and tracks and trails from groups (sounders). Boar tracks are rounder than deer tracks.
- Wild boar at large can host 39 different diseases that can be transmitted to livestock, wildlife, and humans. For example, an outbreak of Foot and Mouth Disease would shut down all Alberta pork and beef exports and cost \$65 billion nationwide.
- Wild boar at large can devastate crops, alter ecosystems, and predate on livestock and wildlife. The cost of damage in the US is estimated at over \$1.5 billion annually.
- Control of wild boar at large can be difficult. The most effective method is to eliminate the entire sounder simultaneously using trained personnel. Hunting is NOT recommended and can intensify the issue as these animals quickly learn to disperse, change movement patterns, become nocturnal, and pass these tricks onto their young.
- Wild boar at large are established in several areas in Alberta.



# SQUEAL ON PIGS!

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