

TAKING AIM AT FERAL PIGS

Feral pigs (*Sus scrofa*) are a major pest and significant threat to Australia's environment, cultural sites, and its \$65 billion agricultural industry. This is due to their destruction of crops, infrastructure, habitat, land and water sources, ability to spread weeds and diseases, predation of livestock and impacts on biodiversity.

A SNAPSHOT

Estimated

**\$106.5
million**

in direct economic costs to the Australian agricultural sector each year¹

Preliminary estimates of total yearly expenditure

**\$47.7
million**

by private landholders (agricultural establishments) on feral pig management²

Widespread distribution

45%
(3.43 million square kilometres)

of Australia is inhabited by feral pigs³

An annual knockdown rate of at least

70% is needed to suppress the growth potential of the population and prevent rapid population recovery⁴

The National Threat Abatement Plan identified

148 species of threatened flora and fauna and **8** threatened ecological communities at the national level adversely affected by feral pigs⁵

Exotic disease incursions could cost in excess of

**\$52
billion**

if they were to enter Australia (e.g. \$50 billion for foot and mouth disease⁶, \$2 billion for African swine fever⁷)

¹Bomford M. and Hart, Q. (2002). Non-indigenous vertebrates in Australia Chapter 3. In *Biological Invasions: Economic and Environmental Costs of Alien Plant, Animal and Microbe* pp. 25–44

²ABARES (in review). Preliminary estimates. Private agricultural landholder expenditure on feral pig management. 2019 National Pest Animal and Weed Landholder Management Survey.

³West, P. (2008). *Assessing Invasive Animals in Australia 2008*. National Land & Water Resources Audit and Invasive Animals CRC, Canberra.

⁴Gentle, M., and Pople, A. 2013. Effectiveness of commercial harvesting in controlling feral-pig populations. *Wildlife Research* 40:459-469.

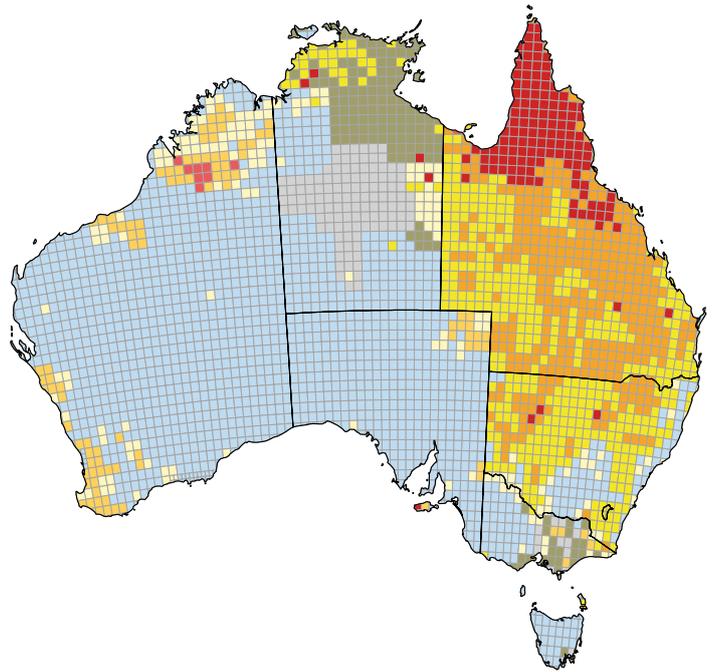
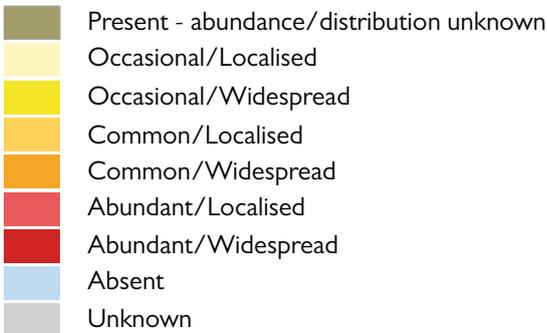
⁵Threat abatement plan for predation, habitat degradation, competition and disease transmission by feral pigs (*Sus scrofa*) (2017), Commonwealth of Australia, 2017.

⁶Buete, B., Wicks, S., Kruger, H., Millist, N., Yainshet, A., Garner, G., Duncan, A., Abdalla, A., Trestrail, C., Hatt, M., Thompson, L.J. and Symes, M. (2013). *Potential socio economic impacts of an outbreak of foot and mouth disease in Australia*, ABARES research report, Canberra, September CC BY 3.0.

⁷ACIL Allen Consulting (2019). *Analysis of African swine fever incursion in Australia*. Prepared for Australian Pork Limited. August 2019.

Available at <http://australianpork.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/African-Swine-Fever-Final-Report-140819.pdf>.

FERAL PIG POPULATION IS WIDESPREAD³



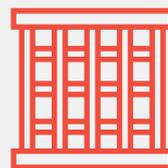
A combination of control techniques are required for effective population reduction



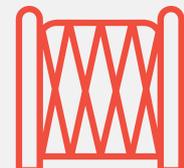
Professional cull
(Aerial or ground shooting)



Baiting



Trapping



Exclusion Fencing

Informed by surveillance, monitoring and data and applied in accordance with the Model code of practice for humane control of feral pigs⁸ and standard operating procedures⁹



EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT NEEDS A STRATEGIC AND COORDINATED APPROACH

⁸Sharp, T., and Saunders, G. (2012). Model code of practice for the humane control of feral pigs. Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities, Canberra, ACT, Australia. Available at <https://pestsmart.org.au/toolkit-resource/code-of-practice-feral-pigs/>.

⁹Centre for Invasive Species Solutions (2014). Standard operating procedures for feral pigs. Available at <https://pestsmart.org.au/toolkit-resource/>.

SO HOW DO WE MINIMISE THREATS FROM FERAL PIGS?



Australia's solution – The National Feral Pig Action Plan

The National Feral Pig Action Plan (the Plan) aims to guide and support all land managers to deliver effective, coordinated, sustained and humane best practice management of feral pigs.

VISION

Actively suppress, or eradicate, Australian feral pig populations to reduce their impacts on environmental, agricultural, cultural and social assets.

THE PLAN WILL FOCUS ON



Effective leadership, coordinated partnerships and strong governance



Community engagement and education



Effective methods and systems

HOW WE WILL KNOW WE ARE MAKING A DIFFERENCE



Long term suppression, or eradication where feasible, of feral pig populations and their impacts



National co-ordination of strategic feral pig management approaches



Strong, cohesive and coordinated partnerships and programs between stakeholders



Increased skills and knowledge of land managers in applying best practice management methods



Effective delivery of new approaches, resources, data management and science-based knowledge to stakeholders



Sustained action and investment over the long term

GOAL	Provide leadership and strategic coordination for sustained feral pig management
OBJECTIVE	Provide national leadership, governance and co-ordination
ACTIONS	<p><i>Ensure the Plan's Implementation Committee provides leadership and strategic coordination, with clear governance structures and responsibilities in place</i></p> <p><i>Ensure national consistency in humane, best practice feral pig management</i></p> <p><i>Ensure linkages with the national Threat Abatement Plan</i></p>
OBJECTIVE	Drive collaborative, co-ordinated and informed approaches to feral pig management
ACTIONS	<p><i>Ensure strategic, adaptive and humane feral pest management at a local, regional and national level</i></p> <p><i>Collaborate with partners to improve co-ordination, decision making, and reporting of adaptive approaches, actions and outcomes</i></p> <p><i>Develop trusted systems, structures and networks to enable and support co-ordinated regional-scale planning and land manager engagement</i></p> <p><i>Establish a coordinator network to support management groups</i></p>
OBJECTIVE	Implement processes and measures to objectively monitor, evaluate and improve the Plan to ensure longevity beyond 2031
ACTIONS	<p><i>Monitor and evaluate the implementation of the Plan</i></p> <p><i>Provide an annual performance report to NFPAP stakeholders</i></p> <p><i>Conduct a half-term (5th year) and full-term (10th year) review of the Plan</i></p>

GOAL	Build community awareness of impacts caused by feral pigs and enhance capacity and capability of all land managers to apply humane, best practice management
OBJECTIVE	Build community and land manager awareness of feral pig impacts and humane best practice feral pig management
ACTIONS	<i>Implement a communication and engagement strategy on feral pig impacts and best practice management</i>
OBJECTIVE	Strengthen land manager capacity and capability to effectively apply humane feral pig best practice management
ACTIONS	<p><i>Implement nationally recognised and accredited training programs for feral pig best practice management</i></p> <p><i>Review current training, and develop training and extension materials in best practice feral pig management</i></p>

GOAL	Increase the adoption of best practice methods and systems
OBJECTIVE	Improve best practice feral pig management methodologies, tools and systems
ACTIONS	<p><i>Ensure feral pig management resources are consistent, updated and incorporate new approaches and technologies</i></p> <p><i>Improve measures and systems to inform feral pig management activities and outcomes by land managers</i></p> <p><i>Develop strategic RD&E opportunities to inform actions</i></p> <p><i>Ensure long term investment through new innovative approaches</i></p>
OBJECTIVE	Drive collaborative, strategic and scientific approaches to humane best practice feral pig management to suppress, or eradicate, feral pig populations and minimise threats
ACTIONS	<p><i>Support existing and implement new collaborative and coordinated feral pig management activities</i></p> <p><i>Ensure adoption of existing and new feral pig management and monitoring technologies by land managers</i></p> <p><i>Develop strategic approaches to deliver active suppression, or eradication, of feral pig populations</i></p>
OBJECTIVE	Ensure adoption of best practice in management plans
ACTIONS	<i>Develop national minimum guidelines for feral pig management plans and templates to promote consistency at local, regional and state/territory levels</i>