

# TAKING ACTION ON 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 year<sup>1</sup>

Preliminary estimates of  
total yearly expenditure

**\$47.7  
million**

by private landholders (agricultural  
establishments) on feral pig  
management<sup>2</sup>

Widespread  
distribution

**45%**  
(3.43 million  
square kilometres)

of Australia is inhabited  
by feral pigs<sup>3</sup>

An annual knockdown rate  
of at least

**70%** is needed to  
suppress the growth  
potential of the population  
and prevent rapid  
population recovery<sup>4</sup>

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 pigs<sup>5</sup>

Exotic disease incursions  
could cost in excess of

**\$52  
billion**

if they were to enter Australia (e.g.  
\$50 billion for foot and mouth disease<sup>6</sup>,  
\$2 billion for African swine fever<sup>7</sup>)

<sup>1</sup>Bomford 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

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

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

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

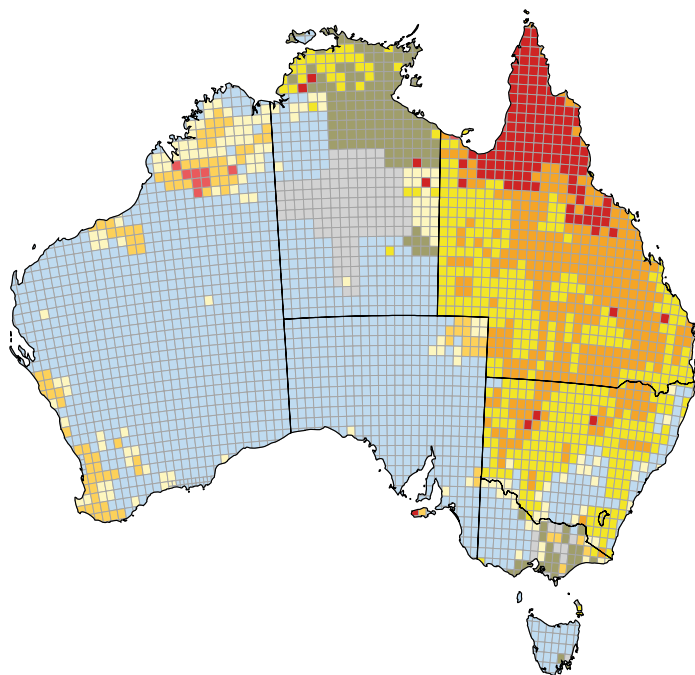
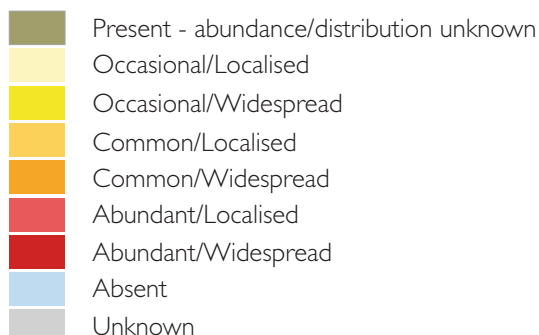
<sup>5</sup>Threat abatement plan for predation, habitat degradation, competition and disease transmission by feral pigs (*Sus scrofa*) (2017). Commonwealth of Australia, 2017.

<sup>6</sup>Buete, 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.

<sup>7</sup>ACIL 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 WIDESPREAD<sup>3</sup>



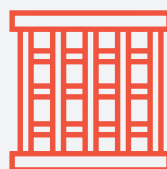
**A combination of control techniques are required for effective population reduction**



**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 pigs<sup>8</sup> and standard operating procedures<sup>9</sup>



**EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT NEEDS A STRATEGIC AND COORDINATED APPROACH**

<sup>8</sup>Sharp, 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/>.  
<sup>9</sup> Centre 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

<b>GOAL</b>	Provide leadership and strategic coordination for sustained feral pig management
<b>OBJECTIVE</b>	Provide national leadership, governance and co-ordination
<b>ACTIONS</b>	<p>Ensure the Plan's Implementation Committee provides leadership and strategic coordination, with clear governance structures and responsibilities in place</p> <p>Ensure national consistency in humane, best practice feral pig management</p> <p>Ensure linkages with the national Threat Abatement Plan and the Threatened Species Strategy</p>
<b>OBJECTIVE</b>	Drive collaborative, co-ordinated and informed approaches to feral pig management
<b>ACTIONS</b>	<p>Ensure collaborative and strategic approaches to adaptive feral pest management at a community, regional and state level</p> <p>Collaborate with partners to improve co-ordination, decision making, and reporting of adaptive approaches, actions and outcomes</p> <p>Utilise trusted systems, structures and networks, in partnership with other vertebrate pest management programs, enable and support coordinated regional-scale planning, land manager engagement and actions</p> <p>Establish a coordinator network to support management groups with effective, adaptive management approaches</p>
<b>OBJECTIVE</b>	Implement processes and measures to objectively monitor, evaluate and improve the Plan to ensure longevity beyond 2031
<b>ACTIONS</b>	<p>Monitor and evaluate the implementation of the Plan</p> <p>Provide annual performance report to NFPAP stakeholder groups</p> <p>Conduct a half-term (5th year) and full-term (10th year) review to measure performance and identify adaptations and improvements required</p>
<b>GOAL</b>	Build community awareness of impacts of feral pigs and enhance capacity and capability of land managers to apply humane, best practice management
<b>OBJECTIVE</b>	Build community and land manager awareness of feral pig impacts and humane best practice feral pig management
<b>ACTIONS</b>	Implement a communication and engagement strategy on feral pig impacts and best practice management
<b>OBJECTIVE</b>	Strengthen land manager capacity and capability to effectively apply humane feral pig best practice management
<b>ACTIONS</b>	<p>Review current training, and develop training and extension materials in best practice feral pig management for land managers</p> <p>Develop and implement nationally recognised and accredited training programs for feral pig best practice management</p>
<b>GOAL</b>	Increase the adoption of best practice methods and systems
<b>OBJECTIVE</b>	Improve best practice feral pig management methodologies, tools and systems
<b>ACTIONS</b>	<p>Ensure feral pig management resources are consistent, updated and incorporate new approaches and technologies</p> <p>Improve measures and systems to inform feral pig management activities and outcomes by land managers</p> <p>Develop research, development and extension (RD&amp;E) opportunities to underpin the Plan's implementation</p> <p>Ensure long term investment through new innovative approaches</p>
<b>OBJECTIVE</b>	Reducing impacts by driving collaborative, strategic and scientific approaches to humane best practice feral pig management to suppress, or eradicate, feral pig populations
<b>ACTIONS</b>	<p>Support existing and implement new collaborative and coordinated feral pig management actions</p> <p>Drive adoption of new feral pig management and monitoring technologies by land managers</p> <p>Develop strategic approaches to protect prioritised assets through active suppression, or eradication, of feral pig populations</p>
<b>OBJECTIVE</b>	Promote adoption of best practice in management plans
<b>ACTIONS</b>	Develop nationally minimum guidelines for feral pig management plans and templates to promote consistency at local, regional and state/territory levels