



A strategic aerial shooting program in Queensland's Channel Country in December 2021 removed 1783 pigs from 300,000 to 400,000 ha over three cattle stations.

Feral pigs are a major business enterprise and environmental threat throughout Western Queensland.

Feral pig numbers have increased from historically low numbers throughout Western Queensland over the past 12 months in response to good seasonal conditions, following drought and a successful feral pig project that concluded in 2018.

This three-station collaborative program is an example of combined neighbourly cooperation. The stations jointly self-funded the helicopter and the professional shooter to carry out the work in December 2021, timed to achieve the best results from the cull.

With the current excellent season in the Channel Country, a high proportion of sows were in pig; their breeding behaviour responding to the seasonal conditions.

It was estimated that between 7,000 and 8,000 pigs will now not be hammering the Channel Country on Keeroongooloo, South Galway and Tanbar Stations in the Windorah district in Queensland.

An amplification of this Channel Country aerial shooting program occurred through the aerial shooting program coordinated by the [South Australia Arid Lands Landscape Board](#) in SA's Far North Channel Country, where 850 pigs were removed from the Diamantina-Warburton River system.

Glenn McCamley is the manager of South Galway station, owned by the Australian Agricultural Company. Pigs are a problem on the 1.2 million acre property of choice channel country. He was instrumental in getting the three neighbouring properties together for the recent shoot. Pilot Brian Philp of 3 Rivers Helicopters and a highly regarded shooter flew two days on Keeroongooloo, two days on South Galway and rounded out the week on Tanbar.

"Back in 2012, pigs were out of control and we shot thousands of pigs helped by government funding through Desert Channels Queensland," Glenn said.

While this controlled shoot was funded by the stations, Desert Channels Queensland supported the effort by supplying avgas and ammunition.

Mr McCamley says the biggest problems are damage to turkey nests, water infrastructure (including float valves on troughs) and contamination of water. This can place livestock in jeopardy.

"We have to constantly go around checking troughs and fixing fences around turkey nests. If we don't control pigs and we get really good seasons, the pig numbers will get out of hand," he said.

The piggish habits of wallowing in wetlands and digging large areas for subterranean foodstuffs also cause erosion, pasture loss and general environmental damage.



Feral pig control methods used by the stations are air and ground shooting, baiting and trapping.

Andrew Miller is the manager of Braidwood near Jundah, on the Thomson River. He says that shooting, when done professionally and to humane standards, is the most efficient method as the number of pigs removed can be quantified.

Andrew said that with the uncertainty of seasons in the West, landholders do not always have money available to invest in feral pig control. "External support helps get a broad community and industry approach to these things".

For further information, please contact Desert Channels Queensland Ph: (07) 46 580 600.

