



Having the right range of control strategies and tools available, as well as using them in integrated ways to tackle feral pig populations and their impacts, is essential. However, it isn't just the cost and practical elements which need to be considered by land managers. Applying these control methods in ways that avoid animal suffering is also paramount.

It is being increasingly recognised by the general community that achieving a humane death for animals targeted in control programs is a key responsibility for all involved, irrespective of the type of pest or damage the cause. Killing 'pest' animals is not just a means to an end which can be justified with little consideration of the impact on the animals - it must be done in a way which causes minimal harm.

Achieving death is not the only consideration in pest control- it is essential to minimise animal suffering prior to this point. The methods currently available to control feral pigs vary in their ability to achieve a humane death. There may also be impacts on animals who aren't directly impacted by the control tool, such as suckling piglets who may be left to starve or die from exposure or predation. There are many aspects to consider when designing an integrated feral pig control program and being aware of the humaneness aspects of each control tool provides a strong foundation to achieving better welfare practices.

But what is a humane death? Put simply, it is when an animal is either killed instantly or

rendered insensible/unconscious until death occurs, without pain, suffering or distress. This is not always easy to achieve but committing to minimising animal suffering will keep the focus on doing the job better. It is also essential that both the social licence to operate by the general community, together with a suite of different control methods are maintained to undertake the work to effectively reduce impacts caused by feral pigs.

Correctly applying the most appropriate combinations of control tools, and at the right time and according to label instructions (for baits), is a great start. Keeping populations low also means less animals will be subjected to control tools in the future. In addition, it is important that anyone implementing control has completed relevant training ensure effective and humane application of control tools and maximise management outcomes.

There will more on meeting this challenge in future newsletters. If you have a specific question relating to this topic, please send an email to contact@feralpigs.com.au.

Useful links: [PestSmart](#)

- [Model Code of Practice for the humane control of feral pigs](#)
- Standard Operating Procedures for best practice management methods

The NFPAP would like to extend our thanks to members of our stakeholder group who have expertise in animal welfare for their valuable input



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