

## Important Diseases

USDA, APHIS and New Jersey Departments of Environmental Protection and Agriculture have collaborated in the sampling of feral hogs to protect human health and agricultural production. Since national feral hog surveillance began in 2005 over 18,500 hogs have been sampled in 38 states for 12 pathogens.

Feral hogs are susceptible to several serious hog diseases of agricultural concern.

### Swine Brucellosis (SB)

Swine brucellosis causes abortions in sows and infertility in boars. Hogs do not die from this disease but the losses in reproduction decrease profits for pork producers. Transmission from feral hogs to cattle has been documented. It can be transmitted to humans through the handling of infected tissues from infected hogs. Humans can be treated, but there is no cure for livestock.

### Pseudorabies (PRV)

Pseudorabies, a herpesvirus, attacks the central nervous system of pigs and other animals. The disease is not related to rabies and does not affect humans. PRV weakens newborn hogs, leaving them susceptible to other diseases, and causes abortions and stillbirths in sexually mature females.

### Classical Swine Fever (CSF)

Classical swine fever, also known as hog cholera, is a highly contagious foreign animal disease that was eradicated from the United States in 1978. Clinical signs include: fever, skin lesions, convulsions and death within 5-14 days post exposure. While CSF does not cause illness in people, economic losses to swine producers would be severe if the disease were to become established in the USA again.

## Safety

- Feral hogs are intimidating and have been known to attack humans. If you encounter an aggressive hog, sidestep quickly and take shelter in a nearby tree.
- People can contract disease from infected feral hogs. Plastic or rubber gloves should be worn while dressing feral hogs. Properly dispose of unwanted hog parts and clean and disinfect work surfaces and equipment to prevent the spread of disease.
- Feral hog meat should be thoroughly cooked before it is eaten.

## Report Sightings

### REPORT HARVEST OF FERAL HOGS TO:

- New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, Division of Fish and Wildlife at **(609) 748-2044**

### REPORT SIGHTINGS OF FERAL HOGS TO:

- USDA, APHIS, Wildlife Services at **(908) 735-5654 x2**
- New Jersey Department of Agriculture, Division of Animal Health at **(609) 671-6400**



## Feral Hogs in New Jersey

### Surveillance and Population Monitoring



## History of Feral Hogs

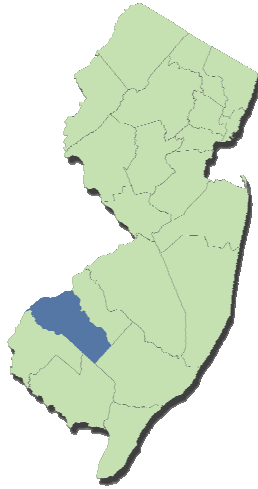
Feral hogs are not native to the United States. They have evolved from swine introduced to Florida by Spanish explorers, are domestic swine that have escaped from farms and/or are true Eurasian wild boars released by hunters. Feral hogs pose a threat to the environment, wildlife, agricultural crops, and livestock. Feral hogs damage pasture and crops through eating, rooting, digging, and trampling. Feral hogs compete with local wildlife and destroy native plants. One of the biggest concerns however, is the potential spread of disease. Feral hogs are known to carry or transmit over 30 diseases and 37 parasites that can be transmitted to livestock, people, pets, and wildlife.



### Characteristics

- Feral hogs come in all shapes and sizes and often have a thick coat of coarse, bristly fur.
- They can reach 3 feet in height, 5 feet in length and weigh over 400 pounds, with the average sow weighing 110 pounds; and the average boar weighing 130 pounds.
- Males have larger heads and tusks than females.
- Feral hogs reproduce rapidly; females begin breeding at about 8 months and can produce two litters of four to twelve piglets every 12-15 months.
- They prefer moist bottomland, are usually nocturnal traveling in family groups.

## Distribution



Free ranging populations of feral hogs exist in more than 30 states in this country. In 2004, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection documented the presence of feral hogs (*Sus scrofa*) in Gloucester County, New Jersey. Since that time, multiple sightings in the state have been reported.

## Signs of Feral Hogs

- Feral hogs root or dig in the ground to find food. Rooted areas can be extensive and cover several acres.
- The hogs leave tracks in the mud near springs, ponds and streams.
- Feral hogs leave scat that resembles the shape and consistency of dog droppings that can contain acorn, grain and the hair, scales or feathers of whatever they have eaten.
- In warmer months, feral hogs create wallows in moist areas. After wallowing, they rub on nearby trees, leaving mud and hair on the bark.



## Surveillance Project

In May 2008, the New Jersey Department of Agriculture partnered with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection and the United States Department of Agriculture, Animal Plant Health Inspection Service (USDA, APHIS) to develop a work plan to monitor New Jersey's feral hog population and to determine the health risks to New Jersey livestock from feral hogs. In 2014, USDA, APHIS began a national effort to help states decrease feral hog damage, expansion and disease threats. New Jersey hunters and the public can assist with this effort by reporting feral hog harvest and sightings to the appropriate agencies.



## Management

- In New Jersey, feral hogs are classified as a potentially dangerous exotic animal and are considered destructive pests.
- It is illegal to import, possess or release live feral hogs in New Jersey (N.J.S.A. 23:4-63 et. seq.).
- Wherever feral hogs are present they become a problem, causing damage to livestock, agricultural fields, forests, the environment, and threatening native wildlife.