

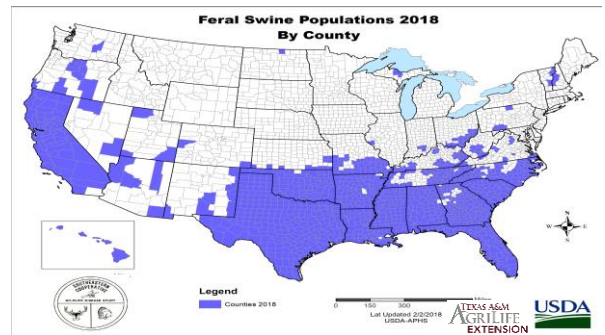


## Feral Swine: the Biology, the Challenge, and the Solutions

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### What's the Current Status

- Population estimates - ~9 M
- Data indicating population increases as much as 25% in 5-year increments
- Breeding populations in 35 states
- Economic impact of \$2.5+ B/Y
- ~\$300/P/Y in damage with impact increasing relevant to commodity



### The Feral Hog Machine



- Omnivores – Eat everything with a calorie
- Highly Adaptable
- Extensive Individual Range
- REPRODUCTION
- Very few predators
- Until recently viewed to be a rural/agricultural problem

### Feral Hog Biology

- Life expectancy of 4-5 years.
- Reproductively capable at 6 months if nutrition is available.
  - 1<sup>st</sup> litter can be weaned before 1<sup>st</sup> birthday of sow.
- Gestation of 115 days.
- Average litter size of 4-6 piglets.
- Average of 1.5 litters annually.
- What do you call a group of feral hogs?

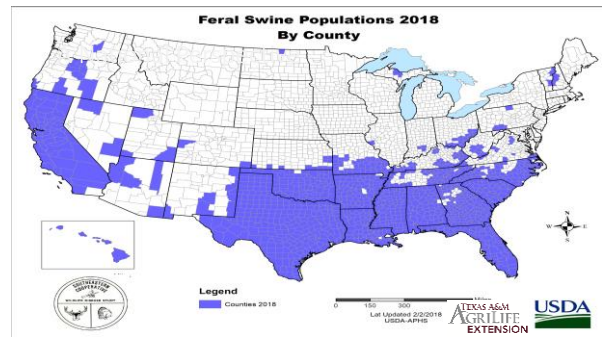


### Feral Hog Biology....Continued.

- Sounders-typically of 6-12 individuals-can be >30.
- Mature hogs from 110-300 lbs.
- Come in 3 Flavors:
  - Eurasian Wild Boar
  - Domesticated hogs released.
  - Combination of the two.



# The Challenge



## Impacts: Water Quality

- Loss of riparian vegetation
- Increased runoff and sedimentation
- Bacterial contamination
  - E. Coli (fecal coliforms)
- Watershed impairment



## Impacts: Plant Communities

- In with the bad...
  - Increase in undesirable, invasive species.
- And out with the good...
  - Decrease in large seeded natives like oak and hickory species
  - Increased girdling of valuable trees.



## Impacts: Wildlife

- Direct predation on wildlife.
- Destroy critical habitat.
- Resource competition.
- Disease transmission.



## IMPACTS: AGRICULTURE

- Disease Transmission
  - Pseudorabies (PRV), Foot Rot, Brucellosis, Anthrax, and others
  - Reservoir issues
- Predation
  - Documented depredation on lambs, kids, and calves. Others likely.
- Economics: Livestock Damage...



## IMPACTS: AGRICULTURE

Crops, hay fields, infrastructure.

## IMPACTS: HEALTH AND SAFETY

- Carry 40+ diseases, including ~20 zoonotic diseases
  - Brucellosis, tuberculosis, anthrax, foot and mouth disease, salmonellosis



## The Solution

### Adaptability and Cooperation

## The Need for Purposeful Management

- Adaptive methods necessary to control abundance and range of wild pigs.
- We must be clear that there are NO "silver bullet" tools.
- Without coordinated response, no combination of tools will be 100% effective.
- If the People do not embrace culture and tools of eradication, we cannot succeed.

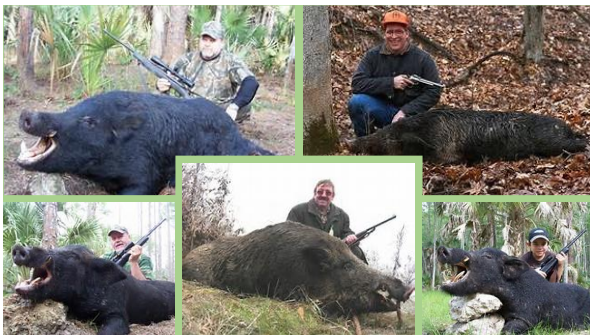


## Toxic Thoughts

- Warfarin – Kaput – Turns tissue blue
  - Multiple feedings to get a lethal dose
- Sodium Nitrite – Hog Gone
  - Single feeding to get lethal dose
- Feed additive – Hog Stop – gossypol
  - Adult males only and must stay on product
- Feeders and placebos
- Secondary poisoning
- Public acceptance and awareness
- Economics
- Does it have a place?

## What should Land Managers be doing.....

- Learn how to read sign.
- Have an ongoing approach to feral hog management.
- Do not release captured hogs:
  - Piglets grow up.
- Do not set limits on hunters/trappers.
- Take the adaptability approach.
  - Integrated Pest Management.
  - Use everything that is legal in management.
- Encourage surrounding land managers to do the same.









Questions

