

# Wild Boar at Large

## An invasive pest in Alberta

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### A danger to farms and animals

Wild boar are farmed in Alberta as livestock. When they are not being raised as livestock on a farm, they are considered to be “at large” and are an invasive pest that can:

- Damage property, agricultural crops, pastures and the environment, including through rooting (digging)
- Endanger people and animals
- Harass livestock and consume their feed, prey on young livestock and wildlife
- Spread diseases that could be transmitted to wildlife, livestock, pets and people
- Alter the ecosystem, including through wallowing that can contaminate water supplies, promote erosion, and destroy fish habitat
- Compete with wildlife and destroy other sensitive natural habitats
- Consume the eggs of ground-nesting birds.

### Wild boar in Alberta

Wild boar are not native to Alberta. They came to the province in the 1980s and '90s as livestock. Over the years, some animals escaped, and have established several feral/wild populations.

### How they survive

Wild boar are very adaptable. The wild boar in Alberta are typically the Eurasian type and have long dark hair and a woolly underfur that protects them from extreme cold. They build nests where they shelter during cold weather and are able to travel in deep snow to access food sources.

### Habitats

Wild boar prefer habitats that provide forest cover for hiding and resting, as well as access to food. During the summer months they can be found close to water sources where they can wallow to stay cool.

### What they eat

Wild boar will eat just about any organic matter. They are omnivores, which means they will eat plants, insects, and other animals. They have a “cartilaginous disc” on their snouts, which helps them dig and root extensively in search of insects and roots. They can use their very sharp tusks for rooting, as well as protection.



### Report wild boar

If you see a wild boar at-large call 310-FARM (3276) or email [af.wildboar@gov.ab.ca](mailto:af.wildboar@gov.ab.ca) note the location and safely provide any photos of damage caused by wild boar or the animals themselves. Provincial government staff will collect the information and work with the landowner and the municipality to help find a solution.

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Alberta 

## Signs of wild boar at-large

Signs of boar activity include:

- Tracks in the snow or mud, or trails of groups (“sounders”) of boar
- Signs of boar digging or rolling around (rooting and wallowing)
- Signs of boar eating your livestock feed
- Boar droppings
- Trampled or destroyed crops



## Alberta's wild boar regulations

Wild boar at-large are an agricultural pest. Under the *Agricultural Pests Act*, landowners are required to control or destroy pests and prevent them from becoming established on their land.

People conducting pest control must adhere to the general laws around firearms and trespassing. Contact your local police or Fish and Wildlife Office for more information.

In 2014, Agriculture and Forestry's Wild Boar Containment Standards were enacted for farmed wild boar. These enhanced fencing requirements were put in place to help prevent boar from escaping and becoming pests at-large.

When wild boar are in captivity, they are considered livestock as long as the farmer meets the fencing standards.

### Hunting Wild Boar is Not a Solution

Non-professional (recreational) hunting of wild boar at-large can actually make it harder for organized control efforts. Boar are very smart. Hunting can make them learn quickly to avoid humans, disperse to new locations and become nocturnal. As well, the high reproduction rate of wild boar means that hunting is not an effective means of control. If you have wild boar at-large on your property, call or email Agriculture and Forestry instead. They and the municipality will work with you to find a solution.

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