

Fertility management for feral swine in the U.S.: A manager's perspective.

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Feral swine (*Sus scrofa*) are considered an invasive species in the US, with an estimated population of 5-6 million animals and over \$1 billion in damage. Feral swine damage agricultural crops and infrastructure, compete with and predate native wildlife, contribute to the spread of invasive plants, serve as reservoirs for a number of disease pathogens affecting livestock, wildlife and humans and destroy wetland systems. Fertility management for feral swine in the U.S. has been considered as an effective tool at reducing the growth in the population (Massei et al, 2011). Fertility management is considered humane, but several models suggest that a combination of fertility management and lethal control is more effective than either method alone. From the manager's perspective, fertility management has the most applicability when feral swine are intended to remain on the landscape (either for cultural purposes or recreational hunting opportunities), and the least application when eradication is the goal. Challenges to effective fertility management include development of effective delivery systems, costs associated with an integrated program, overcoming the high reproductive potential of swine and concerns regarding the use of chemicals in potential meat animals. The author presents a number of scenarios when swine management is conducted and examines the potential role for fertility management. Criteria for the inclusion of fertility management in the U.S. are proposed.