

# NC Feral Swine REGULATIONS



## Legal Definition of Feral Swine

General Statute 113.129 (5c) defines feral swine as any free-ranging member of the species *Sus scrofa*. This species includes all domestic and heritage pig breeds found free-ranging in North Carolina. Domestic swine must be tagged with official identification approved by the State Veterinarian before transport on any public road, or else are presumed to be feral (G.S. 106-798). Feral swine are classified as “nongame, wild animals” (G.S. 113-129 (11d), G.S. 113-129 (15)) and their harvest is regulated by the Wildlife Resources Commission (NCWRC) (G.S. 113-291.2 (a)).

## Importation

All swine imported into North Carolina are subject to requirements under the NC Department of Agriculture, including all permitting, tagging, and health certificate requirements (02 NCAC 52B .0207). No person shall import or transport live feral swine into the state or release any hog, boar, pig, or swine to free range in North Carolina (02 NCAC 52B .0207 (2)(3)).

## Release and Transport

It is unlawful to release or place exotic species, or wild animals not indigenous to that area into an area to stock it for hunting or trapping purposes (G.S. 113-292(e)). Additionally, it is illegal to release pen-raised, domestic, or feral animals on game lands at any time (exempting hunting dogs and raptors for hunting or training purposes) without prior written authorization. This includes swine of any kind (15A NCAC 10D .0102(l)).

It is unlawful to remove live feral swine from a trap or to transport trapped feral swine (G.S.113-291.12). During transport, any swine not possessing official identification is presumed to be feral and any person found transporting feral swine is subject to a fine of up to \$5,000 for each violation - each animal counting as a separate violation (G.S.106-798.1). The acts of removal from a trap and of transporting feral swine after removal count as separate offenses (G.S. 113-294 (s)).

## Hunting

There is no closed season for taking feral swine on private lands, and they may be taken any time during the day or night. Hunters may use artificial lights and electronic calls. There are no bag limit restrictions on feral swine (15A NCAC 10B .0223). However, where local laws govern trapping, or local laws conflict with this law, the local law prevails (15A NCAC 10B .0304).

On game lands, feral swine can only be taken by licensed hunters during the open season for any game animal using any legal manner of take allowed during those seasons. Dogs may not be used to hunt feral swine except on game lands that allow the use of dogs for hunting deer or bear and during the applicable deer or bear season (15A NCAC 10D .0103 (k)). Also on game lands, a permit is required to take feral swine from one-half hour after sunset to one-half hour before sunrise (15A NCAC 10B .0223).

## Trapping

There is no closed season for trapping feral swine. However, in addition to a hunting or trapping license, a feral swine trapping permit issued by NCWRC is required. Individuals exempted from license requirements under G.S. 113-276 must still possess a feral swine trapping permit (15A NCAC 10B .0303 (b)).

Feral swine may be live-trapped using only corral or box traps. Corral and box traps must be constructed so that non-target animals can easily be released or can escape without harm. The permit number must be displayed on all traps.

Feral swine must be euthanized while in the trap and may not be removed alive from any trap. Additional restrictions may apply on certain game lands.



## Feral Swine Carcasses

Carcasses of feral swine may be possessed, transported, bought, sold, given or received as a gift, or otherwise disposed of without restriction (G.S. 291.3 (6)), though more generally it is unlawful to dump animal remains anywhere without permission. For sanitation reasons, burial or incineration are the recommended methods for swine carcass disposal. To prevent groundwater contamination, carcasses should be buried at least 1-3 feet above the seasonal high-water table and at least 300 feet from any public water supply well or public body of water.

## Additional Resources

- Learn more about nation-wide management of feral swine, including best practices, at: [www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/wildlifedamage/operational-activities/feral-swine](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/wildlifedamage/operational-activities/feral-swine).
- Learn more about feral swine in North Carolina, including where to acquire a trapping permit, at: [www.ncwildlife.org/Learning/Species/Mammals/Feral-Swine](http://www.ncwildlife.org/Learning/Species/Mammals/Feral-Swine).
- Report feral swine sightings, damage, and kills to the NC Wildlife Helpline at (866) 318-2401 or [hwi@ncwildlife.org](mailto:hwi@ncwildlife.org).
- For questions about importation or transportation of domestic swine, or to receive a free swine disease test kit, call the NCDA&CS Veterinary Division at (919) 707-3250.



USFWS



Feral swine damage to property, agriculture, and other assets cost the United States an estimated \$1.5 billion each year in damages and control costs. The NC Wildlife Resources Commission supports efforts to eradicate this destructive, invasive species.



The North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission is a member of the



NC FERAL SWINE  
TASK FORCE

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