

Crop, Livestock, and Agricultural Property Damages Climb to \$100 Million

- Texas has the largest feral hog population in the United States—at least 2 million.
- Feral hog numbers and range continue to increase because of high reproductive rates and lack of natural predators.
- Feral hogs cause significant damage to crops, livestock, pastures, fields, fences, roads, ponds, and other agricultural property. Research indicates losses to grain crops alone exceed \$89 million annually, while total agricultural damages likely exceed \$100 million annually.
- Landowners spend an estimated \$7 million annually on feral hog control and damage mitigation.

AgriLife Extension's Response

Using funding from the Texas Department of Agriculture, Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board, eXtension, Renewable Resources Extension Act, and the San Antonio River Authority, the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and Extension Wildlife Services implemented two strategies for conducting educational outreach in targeted areas: (1) direct control and (2) indirect control through education and technical assistance.

- Direct control involves assisting agricultural producers and landowners with the abatement and removal of feral hogs, using individual and multiple integrated control strategies.



- Indirect control consists of providing producers and landowners with the tools necessary to facilitate feral hog abatement through legal control methods via educational outreach and technical assistance.
- More than 5,050 producers and landowners either (1) attended one or more of the 71 educational events from 2015 to 2017 that focused on feral hog behavior and control options and procedures or (2) contacted AgriLife Extension directly to learn more about feral hog abatement.
- Information was disseminated through mass media and social media and on the Coping with Feral Hogs website (feralhogs.tamu.edu), which reached 1.33 million contacts from 2015 to 2017.

Economic Impacts

- Economic benefit was measured in terms of the reduction in crop, livestock, and agricultural property damages caused by feral hogs.
- From 2015 to 2017, the project directly assisted landowners in removing 80,000 feral hogs from more than 25.9 million acres, creating an economic benefit of \$24.2 million. The removal of feral hogs through indirect control resulted in an additional \$5.3 million in benefits, for a total economic benefit of \$29.5 million since 2015.