

Feral Swine Disease Risks and Impacts to Dogs

Why are feral swine a threat to my dogs?



Feral swine (also known as wild hogs, feral pigs, feral hogs, and wild boar) are strong and resilient animals. They have adapted to living in extreme conditions and can often survive disease infections that may sicken or kill dogs. Feral swine also carry many parasites that can be transmitted to dogs, either through direct contact or in the environment.

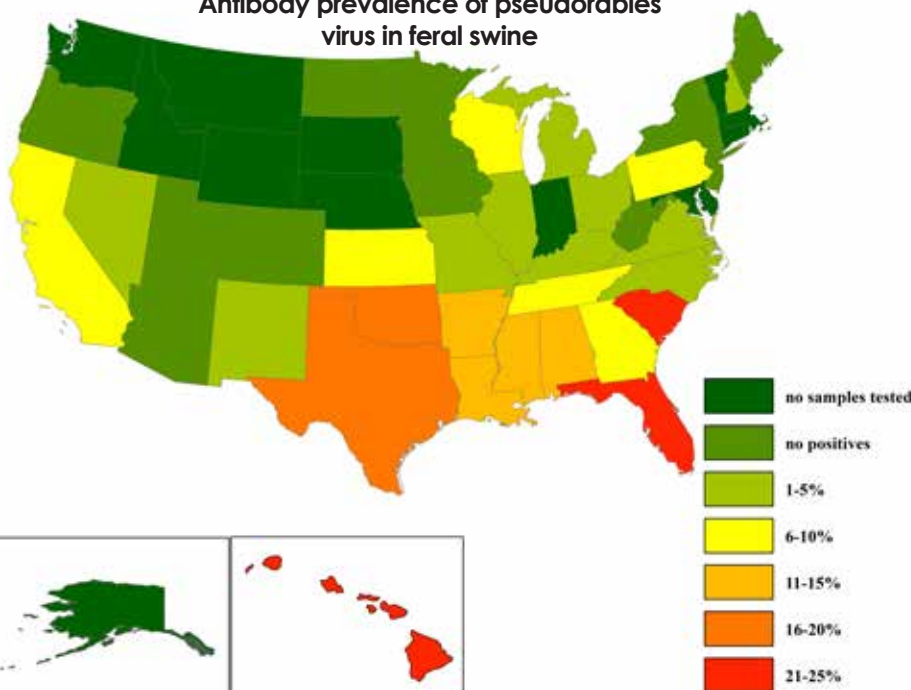
How can feral swine affect my dogs?

Unrestrained dogs and hunting dogs are more likely to approach and chase feral swine putting these dogs at higher risk for disease or injury. Feral swine will generally run to avoid conflict with a dog, but if a dog is not restrained and chases the animals then the risk for attack increases. Feral swine can severely injure a dog with their long, sharp tusks. In addition to the risk of physical injury, dogs can be exposed to many disease pathogens carried by feral swine.



Pseudorabies: an important disease of concern for dogs exposed to feral swine

Antibody prevalence of pseudorabies virus in feral swine



One of the most dangerous diseases that can be transmitted by feral swine to dogs is pseudorabies (also known as "mad itch" or Aujeszky's disease) because it is often fatal to dogs. Dogs become infected through nose-to-nose contact, contaminated water or feed, ingestion of infected tissues, airborne virus, or contaminated clothing, equipment or surfaces. Symptoms may include fever, vomiting, excessive salivation, severe itching, incoordination, and seizures. Death can occur suddenly within a few days of exposure. Contrary to what the name suggests, pseudorabies is not related to rabies, but the symptom of excessive salivation gives it the name. Unfortunately there is no vaccine or treatment for pseudorabies in dogs and it is rare for dogs to recover after exposure.

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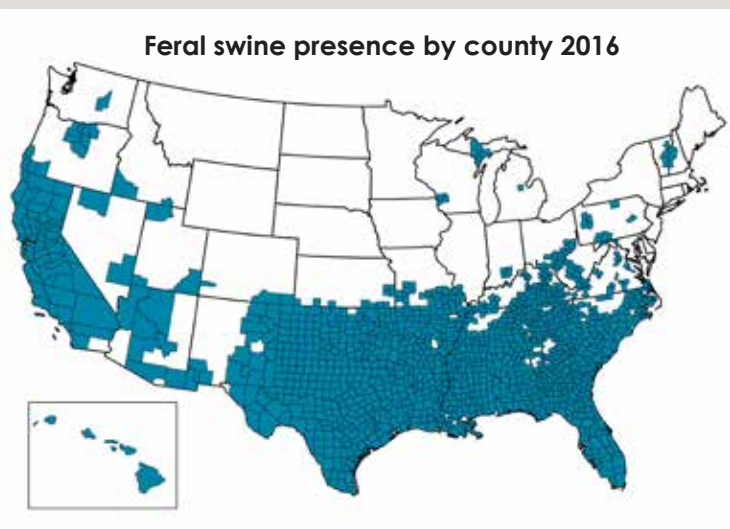


Diseases of Concern for Dogs Exposed to Feral Swine

Disease	Symptoms
Pseudorabies	Fever, vomiting, excessive salivation, severe itching, incoordination, seizures, and sudden death.
Brucellosis (caused by <i>Brucella suis</i>)	Swollen lymph nodes, swollen testicles, infertility, abortions, and can cause chronic illness.
Leptospirosis	Fever, shivering, lethargy, jaundice, and kidney and/or liver failure.
Tularemia	Fever, lethargy, lack of appetite, ulcers in the mouth, and jaundice.
External Parasites	Fleas and ticks cause skin irritation, discomfort, and itching as well as having the potential to transmit many diseases (i.e. Lyme (ticks) and plague (fleas)).
Intestinal Parasites	Intestinal parasites such as round worms or tape worms generally cause diarrhea, vomiting, potbellied appearance, dull coat, and weight loss.

How can I protect my dog from feral swine disease risks?

- If feral swine exist in your area, take additional precautions to prevent interactions between them and your dogs. See the map if you are unsure whether feral swine are in your area.
- Keep your dog restrained or controlled to prevent or minimize direct contact with feral swine.
- Do not feed dogs raw or undercooked feral swine meat or organs or allow them to play with, roll in, or consume any part of a carcass.



- Contact your veterinarian if your dog shows signs of illness, and specify that your dog has been in contact with feral swine.
- Wash your hands and wear proper personal protection (i.e., gloves) when handling feral swine (i.e. field dressing) or a sick dog that has been in contact with feral swine. Many feral swine diseases have the potential to be transmitted to multiple species, including people.

Want to Learn More?

Call the APHIS Wildlife Services program in your State at 1-866-4-USDA-WS or go to www.aphis.usda.gov/wildlife-damage/stopferalswine to learn more about the problems caused by feral swine, as well as to seek advice and assistance in dealing with damage.

