

Feral Hog Trapping

Alabama NRCS Job Sheet AL645G



Overview

Feral hogs have become an ever increasing nuisance in Alabama. They destroy native plants and habitats, cause erosion problems, and compete with native wildlife for food. In addition, they can cause massive crop damage and transmit diseases to domestic livestock. Feral hogs are known to carry both pseudorabies and swine brucellosis.

Pre-baiting

Feral hogs are creatures of habit. As long as there is a food source and they are not disturbed, they will visit the same spot to feed on a daily (or nightly) basis. It is very important to pre-bait the trap site to attract the animals.

The door should be wired open during pre-baiting to allow the animals to come and go as they want. This allows all of the animals, even the most wary of the group, to feel comfortable feeding inside the trap.

After finding hog sign in the trap for the first time, pre-baiting should continue for at least another 2 weeks before setting the trap. When refreshing the bait on a site, wear rubber boots and gloves to minimize human odor.

The best way to pre-bait is to use a timed feeder to dispense bait each day at 30

minutes after dawn and 30 minutes before dark. This minimizes human disturbance in the trap area and is very convenient.

Trap Materials

The main body of the trap should be built using 16 ft. feedlot panels. The panels should be 5 feet in height (60 inch) and have 2 inch by 4 inch openings. In order to maintain durability and strength, thickness of panel wire should be at least 6 gauge, with 4 gauge or .25 in. being preferred. Panels meeting these requirements are commonly referred to as "horse panels".

The trap door will consist of either the "root door" or the "saloon door" design. These are both "continuous catch" designs.

The root door design uses gravity to hold the door closed, but hogs on the outside can push through and enter the trap after it has been tripped. The saloon door design uses springs to hold the door closed, but it can also be pushed open by hogs trying to enter from the outside after it is initially tripped.

The door should have an opening at least 5 feet high and 3 feet wide. These doors should be fabricated out of metal which is suitable for heavy use. In addition, a see-through "window" should be placed in the door or an open designed door should be

used that allows the animals to see into the trap. Be sure to brace the doors to make sure they cannot be forced open from the inside.

Solid steel T-posts (6 foot minimum) will be used to support the panels and the door assembly.

Trap Construction

The panels should be formed into a circular shape or arranged in a “tear drop” shape with the door at the small end. These panels are flexible and can be bent to form these shapes. Under no circumstances should there be corners in the trap. When trapped, hogs tend to bunch up in corners and some may escape. Make sure there are no gaps along the bottom of the panels where hogs might try to root out.

The larger the trap is, the more likely the entire sounder of hogs will be trapped at the same time. Therefore, 4 panels are recommended for each trap. Some circumstances may not allow the placement of a trap with 4 panels, such as areas with heavy brush or thick tree cover. Three panels can be used under those circumstances.

Solid steel T-posts should be driven into the ground every 4 feet to support the panels. Panels should be securely wired to posts and the panel ends should be wired together with a few inches of overlap. The horse panels will be wired to the T posts with 14 gauge or larger galvanized steel wire. They should be wired in four places: the bottom, about 1 foot up from the bottom, 3 feet from the bottom and at the top.

T-posts will also be used to secure the prefabricated trap door to the ground. The door should also be secured to the trap panels with wire. Be sure to mount the door so that it opens toward the inside of the trap.

The trigger cord should be of a material that will be strong, but still light enough to release quickly, such as heavy nylon rope, aircraft cable or coated wire. The trigger design should incorporate pulleys or eye bolts at each turn to keep the trigger cord from binding.

The root gate door trigger should be a standard root trigger. Two wooden or metal stakes are driven into the ground near the back of the trap. The trigger cord is tied to the middle of the trigger (a wooden or metal rod). This trigger is set when the door is pulled open and the tightened cord is hooked over the trigger stakes.

The saloon door trigger is set as a simple trip cord. The cord is run from the trigger (a wooden or metal rod long enough to hold the saloon doors fully open) to the top of one side of the back of the trap, then down to a level of about 10 inches off the ground and then across to the opposite side of the trap. Bait is put on both sides of the trip cord to give enough time for the entire sounder to enter the trap before the cord is tripped.

The traps should be located in an area with all day shade covering most of the trap. Hogs cannot regulate their temperature very well in full sun and can die quickly without shade.

Traps should be checked daily. Trapped hogs should be dispatched immediately. It is illegal to move live feral hogs in Alabama without a permit from the Alabama Department of Conservation. These permits are only written to move live animals to a processing facility where they will be dispatched. Contact your local Alabama Department of Conservation Law Enforcement Officer for details. ***Under no circumstances should feral hogs be released. This practice violates Alabama law.***



Example 1A. Trap door - Root Gate Design.
Photo courtesy of Billy Higginbotham, Texas AgriLife Extension Service.



Example 1B. Trap door. Root Gate design.
Photo courtesy of Wildlife Services, Texas AgriLife Extension Service.



Example 2A. Trap door - Saloon door design.
Photo courtesy of Wildlife Services, Texas AgriLife Extension Service.



Example 2B. Trap door. Saloon door design.
Photo courtesy of Billy Higginbotham, Texas AgriLife Extension Service.



Example 2C. Saloon door trigger mechanism.
Photo courtesy of Billy Higginbotham, Texas AgriLife Extension Service.

REFERENCES

[Feral Hogs in Georgia: Disease, Damage, and Control](#). Georgia Department of Natural Resources. September 2003.

[Coping with Feral Hogs - Hog Trap Design](#). Billy Higginbotham, Professor and Extension Wildlife and Fisheries Specialist, Texas Cooperative Extension; and Don Neusendorff, Research Associate, Texas Agricultural Experiment Station, Texas A&M University, Overton Texas, 2009.

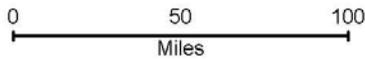
[Feral Hog Control - Trapping](#). The Samuel Roberts Noble Foundation, Inc., 1999.

NOTE: Trap designs shown in these references may not meet requirements for Alabama cost-share.



Feral/Wild Swine Populations 2008 Alabama

This feral swine distribution map was prepared from data independently compiled by state, federal, and territorial fish and wildlife management agencies, agriculture agencies, and universities of the United States in cooperation with the Southeastern Cooperative Wildlife Disease Study, College of Veterinary Medicine, University of Georgia. Support for this project was through Cooperative Agreement Numbers 08-9113-1156-CA and 08-9813-0032-CA, Veterinary Services, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture.



Feral Hog Trapping (AL645G) Checklist

Minimum Specifications for Cost-Share under WHIP, EQIP, and WRP

- ___ Minimum 6 gauge wire (must be 6 or 4 gauge or .25 inch wire)
- ___ Minimum 5 foot (60 inch) panel height
- ___ Minimum of 3 panels per trap (4 recommended)—16 foot panels
- ___ Maximum 2 inch by 4 inch panel openings (commonly referred to as “horse panels”)
- ___ Trap must be constructed in round or teardrop shape without corners
- ___ Heavy, solid steel construction 6 foot T-posts must be placed no more than 4 feet apart securing panels in place
- ___ Either “root door” design or “saloon door” design must be used at entrance. Door must be constructed in a manner that allows hogs on the outside to see animals trapped on the inside

NOTE:

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