



**SQUEAL ON PIGS
MANITOBA**

2023 PROGRAM UPDATE

ABOUT SQUEAL ON PIGS MANITOBA

Background

Squeal on Pigs Manitoba was officially announced on May 9, 2022, under the Canadian Agricultural Partnership program, and continues to receive funding from the Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership. Squeal on Pigs Manitoba is jointly funded by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Manitoba Agriculture, and Manitoba Pork.

Vision

Squeal on Pigs Manitoba aims to first control, and then eliminate wild pigs in Manitoba.

Team

Cam Dahl, general manager, Manitoba Pork

Jenelle Hamblin, director, swine health, Manitoba Pork

Susan Riese, director, public relations, communications and learnings, Manitoba Pork

Joey Dearborn, communications and website coordinator, Manitoba Pork

Wayne Lees, program coordinator

Devon Baete, field operations manager

Ben Waddle, field operations technician, western Manitoba

Doug Larcombe, field operations technician, eastern Manitoba

Natasha Fafard, field operations technician, northwestern Manitoba



MESSAGE FROM THE COORDINATOR

The second full year of the Squeal on Pigs Manitoba initiative has seen a significant expansion of our capacity in many aspects of the program. Thanks to the support from the Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) African Swine Fever Prevention and Preparedness Program, the Manitoba government and Manitoba Pork, we have been able to increase our equipment inventory to now include 30 traps, 90 cell-enabled trail cameras, and two thermal-imaging drones, along with the associated logistics support needed to deliver the program across the province. With the addition this year of Natasha Fafard, we now have part-time technicians located strategically throughout the province.

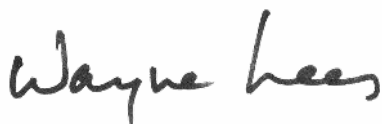
Over the last year, we have developed a full-fledged information and mapping system that allows us to track sightings reported by the public, manage baiting and trapping sites, and track removal success. Our website includes maps of recent and historical sightings, with a new map added every three months to provide a more accurate representation of wild pig movements (where wild pigs are now, not the cumulative count of where they have been seen). This allows us to focus our removal efforts where they will be most effective.

Finding out where the wild pigs are is one of our biggest challenges in Canada. We rely on reports of wild pigs submitted by the public to alert us to the areas we need to focus on. Once we receive a report, our field staff contact local landowners to verify the information, and then set up trail cameras, as well as baiting and trapping sites. Our approach is to work with the landowner as a partner to facilitate the removal of these destructive animals. To safeguard this trust, we do not publicly release trapping locations.

Collaboration and partnerships are the backbone of Squeal on Pigs Manitoba. We have working relationships with First Nations communities, Nature's Conservancy Canada, Parks Canada, Manitoba Agriculture, Manitoba Natural Resources, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada. We have given presentations to the Manitoba Association of Watershed districts, Rural Municipality councils, livestock and crop producer groups, and interprovincial, national and trans-boundary wild pig workshops. During the winter of 2023-24, we will be partnering with Manitoba Natural Resources to conduct an aerial survey throughout southwestern Manitoba. We are working closely with Assiniboine Community College in Brandon and BDX Laboratories in Winnipeg to develop a diagnostic test to identify wild pig DNA in water samples, and are collaborating with Animal Health Canada to develop a national wild pig reporting system.

Wild pigs are an extremely intelligent and well-adapted invasive species, but they are not invincible. They do not possess superpowers, they cannot fly, they do not have capes. If we want to eradicate them from Manitoba, we will need to use all the latest tools to first find them and then remove them. There is no quick and easy fix, but it is my belief that with perseverance and hard work, we can be successful in the long run. This is a campaign that we can win.

Sincerely,



Dr. Wayne Lees
Project Coordinator, Squeal on Pigs Manitoba

2023 RESULTS

Sightings Reported

157

Pigs Removed
(Trapped or Hunted)

127

Number of Media
Interviews

20

Average Number of
Cameras in Operation
Per Month

80

Average Number of
Traps in Operation
Per Month

25

Average Number of
Landowner Contacts
Per Month

150

Website Users

28.7K

Number of Presentations Given

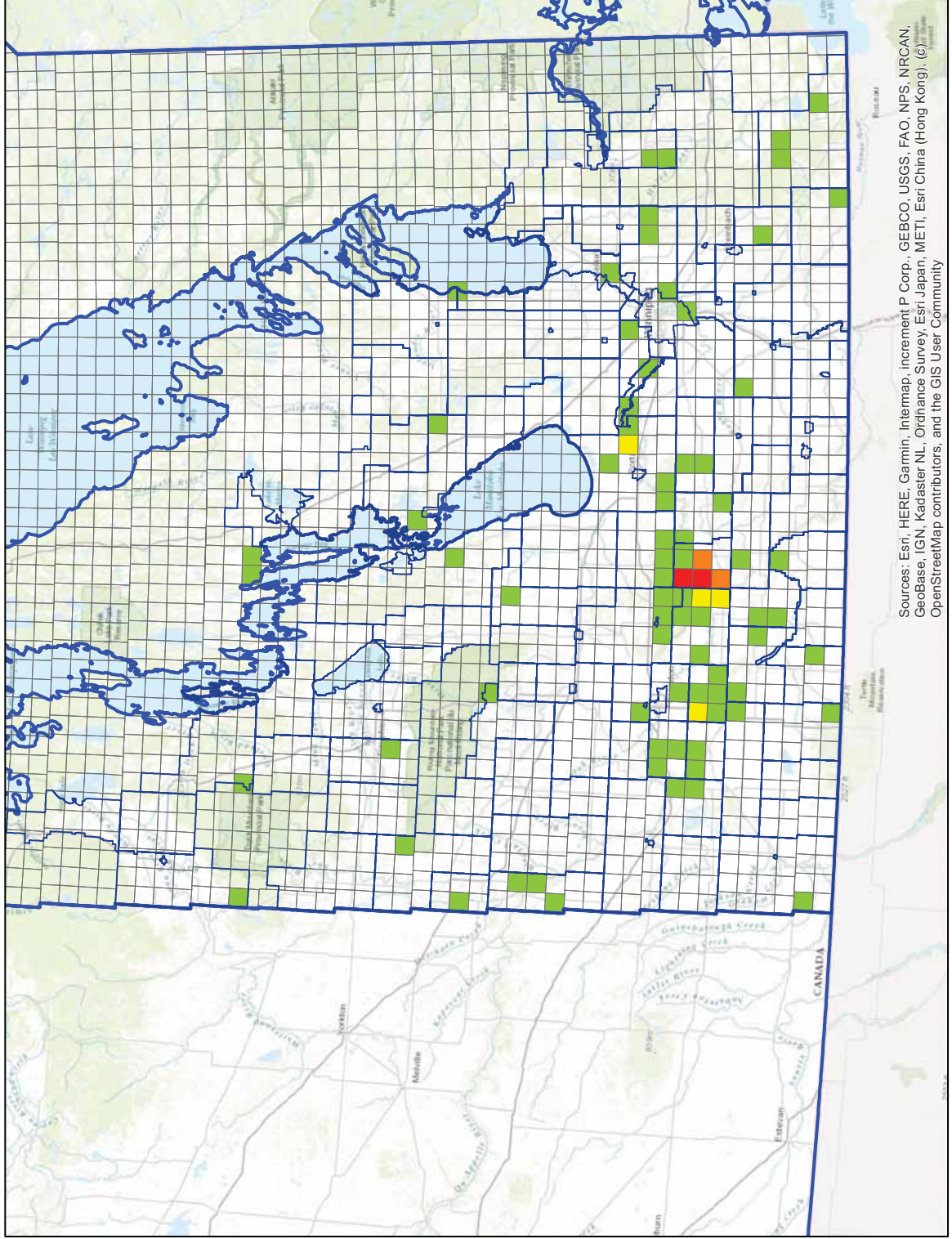
22

Ad Impressions

5.6M

Sightings 2023

January 2, 2024



Legend

Muni Boundaries

Province Boundaries

Number of Sightings - Township

Count_

0

1 - 5

6 - 10

11 - 24

25 - 29



Sources: Esri, HERE, Garmin, Intermap, increment P Corp., GEBCO, USGS, FAO, NPS, NRCAN, GeoBase, IGN, Kadaster NL, Ordnance Survey, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), (c) 2013 Swisstopo, OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community

Project Timeline



Drone technology is being used to track and capture wild pigs



Wild pig sighting caught using drone technology

January

- Completed 2022 data wrap-up and maps of sightings published
- Staffed displays at Manitoba Beef and Forage Days and Manitoba Ag Days
- Continued to promote public awareness through year-round digital marketing tactics targeted at specific audiences in specific locations.

February

- Provided Squeal on Pigs presentations to Manitoba Beef Producers, Manitoba Swine Seminar, and Manitoba Crop Connect
- Finalized testing of new information management and mapping system for tracking sightings and management of the program
- Presented to over 180 participants from Canada, U.S., and Mexico during the Transboundary Webinar organized by Canadian Council on Invasive Species
- Participated in CFIA webinar, bringing together wild pig coordinators from across Canada

March

- Promoted program at Royal Manitoba Winter Fair, generating significant interest from attendees
- Provided media interviews to Roblin Review and the Swan Valley Star
- Updated stakeholders on the Steering and Operations committees on the progress of the Squeal on Pigs Manitoba campaign
- Gave presentation to the African Swine Fever Executive Management Board in Ottawa, where national coordination issues were discussed
- Ran a 4-week radio spot on key rural stations to encourage the reporting of wild pigs signs and sightings (repeated in the fall)
- Ran print ads in key rural community papers (repeated in the fall)

April

- Increased funding approved under the AAFC African Swine Fever Industry Preparedness Program: Prevention and Preparedness Stream allowed for greatly expanded activities, like purchasing new equipment, hiring an additional field technician, launching a new field research trial, and increased collaboration with Manitoba Natural Resources
- Continued discussions with Prairie Swine Centre to support biosecurity outreach to small-scale producers
- Media interviews given to Minneapolis Star-Tribune and Farmscape
- Gave presentation to Central Assiniboine Watershed

May

- Ordered new equipment, bringing total to 90 trail cameras and 30 traps
- Held field day east of Spruce Woods Park, that hosted over 30 participants, including stakeholders from Swan Lake First Nation, DND Shilo, Nature's Conservancy Canada, Parks Canada, Manitoba Natural Resources, Manitoba Agriculture, CFIA, Saskatchewan Pork, and the Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation
- Initiated research proposal with Assiniboine Community College and BDX Laboratory in Winnipeg to develop capacity to test water samples for environmental wild pig DNA

June

- Hired Natasha Fafard as new field technician to cover northwest Manitoba, based out of Swan River
- Held discussions with Assistant Deputy Ministers in Agriculture and Natural Resources to strengthen policy around wild pig regulations
- Continued collaboration with Manitoba Natural Resources, participating in their aerial surveillance program
- Collected spleen samples from wild pigs for the National Centre for Foreign Animal Disease, which were used to refine testing methodology

Project Timeline



Field Day Attendees, May 2023



Dr. Wayne Lees presenting as part of a Field Day

Project Timeline



Increased media attention came to the program as a result of this poster



Traps like these are used in collaboration with landowners

July and August

- Staff attended the Pacific Northwest Economic Region conference in Boise, Idaho and delivered two presentations on the wild pig control program in Manitoba, while also meeting with other provincial and U.S. wild pig representatives and experts
- Collaborated with Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation to plan a fall meeting of wild pig operational staff from across the western provinces
- Translated brochure to French, and made it available for download on Squeal on Pigs website
- Invested in additional promotional items to create brand awareness
- Invested in the development of a wild pigs poster for distribution to specific organizations

September

- Demonstrated Manitoba's information management and mapping system to Alberta and Saskatchewan wild pig program managers, and offered to share the program with the respective provinces
- Started eDNA project with water sampling across the province
- Held team planning meeting in Winnipeg to plan for the upcoming fall/winter season
- Interviewed by SwineIt podcast, reaching a North American hog sector and industry audience

October

- Increased media interest in program due to elusive wild boar in southwestern Manitoba, picked up by mainstream media outlets with interviews on CBC, CTV, CityTV, Brandon Sun, and CKDM
- Prepared briefing note and backgrounder for new Ministers, Deputy Ministers, and Assistant Deputy Ministers following fall provincial election and change of government
- Participated in national leadership working group to collate and summarize wild pig data for Canada

November

- Worked with Animal Health Canada to develop national summary of wild pig sightings and removals across Canada, with a density map to be produced to illustrate most active areas
- Produced first draft of Standard Operation Procedures manual
- Staff participated in field operations seminar in Humboldt, SK, attracting field technicians from across western Canada to share best practices, and highlight challenges of wild pig control under cold climate conditions
- Media calls continued with interviews in Winnipeg Free Press, CJOB, Global, and an in-depth field demonstration and interview with The Western Producer

December

- Summary of Manitoba's wild pig control program operations and results for 2023 was presented to high-level staff at CFIA
- Negotiations began regarding Manitoba Pork's offer to host the national wild pig database
- Organization of Canadian Wild Pig Summit began, to be held in April 2024 in Brandon, in conjunction with Assiniboine Community College, Animal Health Canada, and Squeal on Pigs Manitoba
- Organized an international webinar on Canadian wild pig control efforts together with AAFC's international trade rep in Minneapolis, to be held in January 2024, with participation from a number of northern U.S. states



Wild boar skulls are part of the display items taken to various conferences

Project Timeline



Staff hosted a reporter from The Western Producer for a Field Day and on-site interview



Public got busy squealing on pigs

Wild pig sightings went up as awareness grew, industry group says

By Gerilyn Wichers

Published April 25, 2023

Reading Time: 2 minutes

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ENVIRONMENT

'Wanted' wild pig evades capture in southwestern Manitoba for months, campaign says



By **Sam Thompson & Talha Hashmani** • Global News

Posted November 1, 2023 10:21 am • Updated November 1, 2023 7:38 pm • 3 min read



