

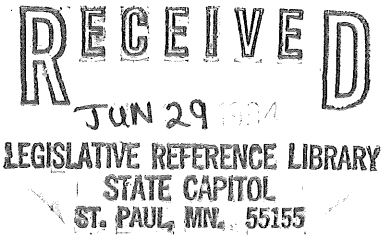
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# **WILD HOG REPORT**

**PREPARED FOR THE  
1994 LEGISLATIVE SESSION**

**BY THE  
WILD HOG TASK FORCE  
MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
FEBRUARY, 1994**

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The 1993 Minnesota Legislature required the appointment of a Wild Hog Task Force by the Commissioner of Agriculture to study and determine whether or not the raising of Eurasian swine (*Sus Scofa* Subspecies) should be banned in Minnesota.

Two hearings were held where public testimony was heard. Most of the public testimony favored banning. The Task Force also took testimony at two farm sites to observe the conditions under which "Eurasian swine" are raised for hunting and for slaughter. Additionally, a national survey was conducted, by letter, with state agencies in 48 states. The survey revealed the following:

- 32 states considered wild hogs a liability if they are loose in the wild;
- 5 states said they were an asset if they are loose in the wild;
- 12 states that have these swine running wild have organized control efforts to reduce their number;
- 19 states allow hunting of wild hogs, many with year-round hunting and no limits.

## FINDINGS

- Some states reported real problems dealing with wild hogs that are "in the wild"; Feral swine (free roaming) of all kinds were reported to be undesirable and found to cause harm in some states to streams, woodlands and some other wild life.
- The Task Force found that there are 6 known farms raising "Eurasian swine" with a total number of about 300 hogs;
- At this time, no one is aware of any "Eurasian swine" on the loose in Minnesota as is the case in some states in the southern U.S. where they have been "in the wild" for hundreds of years;
- Heretofore, "Eurasian swine" have been unregulated in Minnesota (except testing for disease control); however in 1993, legislation was enacted to

restrict the raising and production of this species of swine (M.S. 84.9695, Appendix A).

- There are no rational scientific means to determine what exactly is a pure "Eurasian wild hog" vs Feral pig vs Domestic pig other than visual observation; however, with some individual swine, the difference is not distinguishable.. There is some preliminary DNA data which suggests that a blood test for a determination may be available in the near future, but nothing is yet proven.

At the final meeting of the Wild Hog Task Force, in a 7 to 2 vote, it was decided not to recommend a total ban of "wild hog" production in Minnesota.

Therefore, the Task Force recommends that the current law restricting production be continued allowing "wild hog" farming.

It is further recommended that the study continue through 1994 to evaluate new information that will be forthcoming from USDA and others.

It is further recommended that permits be required and that the Minnesota Department of Agriculture be charged with future responsibilities in issuing restricted species permits relating to approving containment and other regulatory measures required in law for restricted species, namely "Eurasian pigs" (*Sus Scofa* Subspecies).

The Department of Natural Resources is currently the designated agency authorized to issue the permits and enforce rules.

## CONCLUSION

The majority of the Task Force believe that the small "wild hog" industry in Minnesota does not constitute a serious danger (under current restrictions) to the environment of our state. If, however, they should become loose and reproduce in the wild over the years, some crop production could be at risk, as well as the spread of disease to domestic swine would then be a

possibility. It was pointed out to the Task Force that many other potential hazards to the ecology and the environment, man-made and natural, are a greater risk than the current status of "wild hog" farming here and that if state government attempted to eliminate all risks that evolve from the manner in which we do business and conduct our life style, there would not be enough financial resources left over for citizens to enjoy this new risk-free society.

Eurasian swine regulations that may be needed for the future:

- There may be some non-regulated herds; if so, they need to be found and reported to the Board of Animal Health.
- Facilities holding known herds need to be inspected and issued permits when appropriate.
- Methods should be developed to differentiate between domestic and Eurasian swine herds.

**NOTE:** The Task Force did not have funding provided so, other than the cost of mileage in a state van provided by the DNR to hog farms near Little Falls, a few hours of time by three State employees, and thanks to the citizen members who volunteered their time, there was no cost to the State for this report.

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