

FERAL PIGS

CARCASS HANDLING

Introduction

Feral pig are categorised as wild game and healthy carcasses will normally enter the human food chain. This guide describes legal responsibilities and how feral pig carcasses should be handled to maintain acceptable meat hygiene standards. The carcass preparation series of Guides in the Wild Deer Best Practice Guides [insert link etc] describes practices and techniques that can also be applicable to feral pig. In addition to this brief guide, the Food Standards Scotland Wild Game Guide should be read as it contains guidance on meat hygiene that is as relevant to feral pig as to other “large game” species.

Legislation

There is a legal obligation on everyone who produces food to ensure that it is safe to eat. These legal obligations were brought into force by the Food Hygiene Regulations 2006.

Any wild game carcasses intended for sale to an approved game handling establishment (AGHE), must be inspected and tagged by a ‘trained person’ who must record and report:

- ◆ unusual behaviour in the animal before culling,
- ◆ any abnormality observed in the gralloch, or carcass,
- ◆ any condition which might lead one to suspect infection with a Notifiable disease.

It is strongly recommended that where boar meat is intended for home consumption or sale directly to the final consumer, the carcass and organs are also subjected to a full inspection by a trained person.

There is a legal requirement for anyone registered as a food business operator to have in place a food safety management system based on hazard analysis and critical control point (HACCP) principles when



in- skin carcasses are skinned and broken down for sale as meat or processed products. (See BPG Hygiene Principles [insert link]).

Carcass inspection

The principles of carcass inspection are similar to those used in BPG Carcase Inspection [insert link] and must be continuous throughout the carcass preparation process.

An additional feature to the inspection of boar carcasses is that the law requires AGHEs to submit

tissue (part of diaphragm) samples for Trichinella disease testing. Shooters are encouraged to do the same for carcasses intended for personal or local consumption. The UK is in the process of obtaining the status of a being a region with a Trichinella negligible risk, therefore it is important to submit samples to enable risk based surveillance to continue. Sample kits and details of how to collect and send samples are available from the Food Standards Scotland

Carcass preparation

- ◆ Approach a shot pig cautiously and confirm that it is dead
- ◆ If anything about the behaviour of the animal before shooting or the condition of the carcass after shooting gives rise to any suspicions of disease, isolate the entire carcass and notify your local Animal Health office.
- ◆ Use thoracic (base of neck) sticking to bleed the carcass as soon as possible where it was shot, or nearby as appropriate.
- ◆ Remove and inspect the stomach and intestine at the point of shot. Removal and inspection of the pluck at the point of shot will facilitate more rapid carcass cooling. Take great care not to rupture the gall bladder which is associated with the liver.
- ◆ When removing the diaphragm, either at point of shot or in the larder, take a Trichinella sample if participating in the FSA scheme. If the carcass will be delivered to an AGHE leave at least a 2” (5cm) square piece of the diaphragm intact for Trichinella testing at the AGHE.
- ◆ For carcasses which will be delivered to an AGHE leave the head and feet on.
- ◆ Transport the carcass paying due care and attention to carcass hygiene and personal safety (safe lifting)
- ◆ Carry out further carcass preparation and inspection at the larder

- ◆ Store in-skin carcasses at below 7o centigrade but do not freeze. Boar carcasses can be stored with deer carcasses.
- ◆ Record carcass details and apply AGHE tag if appropriate.
- ◆ If a Trichinella sample has been submitted it would be appropriate to wait until test results are received before releasing the carcass for further processing.
- ◆ Carcasses to be transferred to a third party for final processing must be delivered skin-on and head and feet on with the diaphragm attached. Carcasses for delivery to an AGHE must also be tagged and carry a declaration according to the requirements of the Wild Game Guide.
- ◆ Feral pig meat produced by a hunter or member of a hunting party must be processed for sale direct to the final consumer according to the requirements of the Wild Game Guide.

Disposal of animal waste

Disposal of waste from feral pigs whether culled or casualty animals, by-products, part carcasses or whole carcasses, should be treated in every respect the same as for waste from wild deer. See Wild Deer Best Practice Guide Larder Design [insert larder]

Records

Knowledge of the population dynamics and spread of feral pigs in Scotland is incomplete. Anyone culling wild boar is urged to keep complete records of the sex and age of individuals, and where and when they were shot. Such records could become a valuable source of population information.