

**Aerial Bait Trial for Feral Swine**  
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Pseudorabies and swine brucellosis are 2 diseases that have been documented in many U.S. feral swine populations. Cooperative state/federal/industry programs are in progress to eradicate these diseases among domestic swine herds, and the disease reservoir status of feral swine may be a potential obstacle to these efforts. Advanced technology in vaccine production may provide a means of controlling these diseases within feral swine populations through oral vaccination. In anticipation of this possibility, SCWDS has been evaluating bait delivery to wild swine. A previous SCWDS study demonstrated that approximately 95% of the feral swine on Ossabaw Island, Georgia, could be reached through hand placement of baits. To test the potential of large-scale vaccine delivery systems, an aerial bait drop was recently conducted on this same site.

The experiment is being done in cooperation with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, the Ossabaw Foundation, E.I. DuPont Co., and the Chatham County Georgia Mosquito Control Commission. During January 1993, more than 6,000 polymer fish meal baits containing a tetracycline biomarker were aurally delivered by helicopter to 3 study compartments, each with a different bait density. One hundred feral swine and 30 raccoons were examined from each area to estimate bait consumption. Preliminary results from tracking stations indicated that more than 90% of the baits were consumed within 72 hours; results of tests to determine what percentages of the feral swine and raccoons ate the bait are pending. We are anxiously awaiting these data since aerial distribution is likely to be the only practical method to orally vaccinate wild swine in many inaccessible areas.