

worrying about hogs on their property until the numbers have already gotten out of control.

In many places like East Texas, it's become a cycle of managing the damage rather than preventing population growth and dispersals. In places like West Texas where it hasn't gotten bad yet, landowners should take measures to get control of the situation before it's too late.

Educating others is another important way to contribute to the cause. While landowners who have dealt with feral hogs know how much of a nuisance they are, the common Texas resident is not aware of the issue.

"Landowners affected by it

know how bad it is, but most people don't," Tomecek said. "I encourage folks to talk about it all the time to anybody that will listen. Tell them how bad it is. It's an exotic invasive species. It has no place in our ecosystem."

The two primary things Tomecek normally advises, though—use every method early and often, and work together with your neighbors in an effort to minimize the issue. Landowners normally see the most results when multiple methods are combined to capture hogs.

Implementing these methods before the problem gets out of control—when possible—is far more effective than just managing the damage. Many of

these efforts can backfire, however, if landowners are not willing to work with their neighbors to eradicate feral hogs in the entire area.

"Pigs don't respect fence lines or property boundaries. They don't care," Tomecek said. "We should work on all of our neighbors. That's the way to control pigs."

The largest impact will be made when private landowners make an effort to implement proper management practices on their own land, as well as encourage others in the area to do the same.

"We're a private land state. Without private landowners doing the work, nobody can make it happen," Tomecek said.

## Wet winter and dry summer contributes to anthrax in Texas

The previous wet winter, followed by a dry, warm summer proved to be the ideal conditions for anthrax to flourish in what is becoming to be known as the "anthrax triangle" region in Texas. This area is comprised of the southwest Texas counties of Crockett, Kinney, Sutton, Uvalde, Val Verde, and Maverick. However, outbreaks typically end when the cooler weather arrives.

But first, let's back up and take a look at what exactly is anthrax, how it can be contracted, and other related information.

Anthrax is a naturally occurring disease affecting deer, livestock, exotic livestock, horses, swine, dogs and humans. It is caused by *Bacillus anthracis*; a sporeforming bacteria. The bacteria can

remain alive, but dormant in the soil for several years. It is infectious to all mammals, including humans. The disease is almost always fatal in deer and livestock. In humans, anthrax is treatable at early stages with antibiotics, but it can be fatal if it is not treated. Livestock can be vaccinated; producers in anthrax-endemic counties typically vaccinate. Humans can be vaccinated; however, vaccination is not typically recommended unless individuals are at high risk of infection (military personnel stationed in the Middle-east where anthrax could be used as a biological weapon).

There are three types of infections possible in humans: (1) cutaneous (skin), (2) inhalational (lungs), and (3) gastro-intestinal

(stomach).

Cutaneous anthrax is the most common form of the disease and may result from contact with infected materials (especially body fluids from an infected carcass). Infection is more likely if you have open wounds on your skin. After an incubation period of 1 to 10 days, there will be a blister-like lesion at the site of infection that eventually turns black. Cutaneous anthrax is readily treatable (even if lesions are apparent) with antibiotics. If personnel have been exposed and develop this type of lesion, they should seek medical attention immediately.

Inhalational anthrax is less likely to occur, but is more serious. After incubation (1 - 10 days), the individual may exhibit flu-like symptoms (fever, tiredness, cough, chest pain). Inhalational anthrax progresses very quickly; without early treatment it is fatal.

*(Continued on next page)*



"The government can help you, the day, if I don't have expertise from guys who do landowners wanting to change nothing but trap all day long, something, it won't get done that can help. But at the end of here."

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