

American Bulldog in the Spotlight

American Bulldogs have been part of American history for decades, if not centuries. Their history is vast and uncertain and their heritage rich. Since their inception, their job has always been a utilitarian farm worker. Duties included protection of property, livestock, and owners and as an aid to food sources. Both of these tasks in part embodied the use of the dogs to catch feral swine. A tradition that is practiced in modern times. Today that tradition and the truest definition of an American Bulldog is at risk.

Feral swine is a non-native invasive species in the United States with numbers reaching well over 3,000,000. [1] They do tremendous damage to the lands they inhabit and the species around them. They have caused damage to forest regeneration sites, crops, pastures, ponds, springs and water holes. They have caused complete destruction of ecosystems, as well as, fatalities to animals (wild and domestic) and humans through competition, predation, and disease. [2] Damage from hogs is costly as states such as Texas report a spending of \$52,000,000 year in repairing damages. [3]

Hunting with trained dogs is a proven non-lethal way to safely remove feral hogs from properties. Why is this important? One, in some areas, subdivision, golf courses, etc., the discharging of a firearm may be illegal or unsafe. [4] Two, most hogs to be consumed are removed and kept alive after field castration to get the best tasting meat. Three, many times the meat is donated to food banks and shelters, in which case the living animal is brought to a plant for processing and distribution. The later is quite common The Texas Dog Hunter's Association, for example, routinely sponsors an event where the goal is to " feed the needy, feed the hungry and help the farmers out with their hogs", says member Shane Carver. [5]

American Bulldog wearing a cut vest and collar



Safety is of the utmost importance for both hunter and dog as the tusks of a boar are equivalent to those of a sharp knife (knife collectors add boar tusks to their collection). For this reason a good catchdog is highly valued, as the better the catchdog; the safer the hunter and the dog. All of the dog's vital organs are covered with both a protective collar and vest made of tough materials like DuPont Kevlar(R). If an accident does happen, the hunter is well equipped to handle the situation with a emergency bag that rivals the shelves of veterinarians. Before a dog is ever taken out on a hunt they must be trained to learn the safest and most efficient way to catch. Training is done in a "catch pen" where the hunter has full control of the situation.

"Catch pens" are also used as a testing ground to see if an American Bulldog has a natural instinct to catch and hold properly, safely, and efficiently. This is used as a selection process for breeding purposes as by its very own definition an American Bulldog should do this naturally.

Recently the American Bulldog has been put in the spotlight and the history and heritage that defines them has been threatened. The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) has decided catchdogs will be their next target. HSUS has never been a collective voice for any of our local humane societies/shelters or any government agency. HSUS does not shelter, adopt out, or neuter animals. HSUS does not share funding with local humane societies but they do charge them for their assistance and programs. The HSUS is an advocacy organization solely representing it's own political agendas. [6] HSUS is categorized with organizations like PETA and ALF and holds many of the same felonious members. These are the facts and we, the American Bulldog community, urge you to educate yourself as to the ways of the HSUS. **Please do not support their efforts to destroy our right and ability to hunt with the aid of properly trained and tested dogs.**

DR. MICHAEL FOX, HSUS "The life of an ant and the life of my child should be granted equal consideration" Dr. Fox "inhumane society" Fox publications

WAYNE PACELLE, V.P. HSUS "If we could shut down all sport hunting in a moment, we would." (Quoted in "Impassioned Agitator," Associated Press, Dec. 30, 1991)

References: [1.] Woods, Chuck. 2005. "Hog Wild in Florida! UF Experts Say Feral Pig Problem Here to Stay". *University of Florida*. <http://www.napa.ufl.edu/2005news/wildhogs.htm>. [2.] Miller, James E. 1997. "A National Perspective on Feral Swine". *Fish and Wildlife, Extension Service*. <http://texnat.tamu.edu/symposia/feral/feral-3.htm>. [3.] Blaney, Betsy. "Wild Hogs Mangling Fields in Texas". *ESPN Outdoors*. http://espn.go.com/outdoors/conservation/s/c_fea_hog_damage_TX.html. [4.] Stevens, Russell L. "The Feral Hog in Oklahoma". *The Samuel Roberts Noble Foundation, Inc.* <http://www.noble.org/Ag/Wildlife/FeralHogs/Index.htm>. [5.] Collins, Jason. 2005. "Hog Hunt to Benefit Food Banks". *Victoria Advocate Online*. <http://www.thevictoriadvocate.com/front/story/2652748p-3075136c.html>. [6.] "Charities Report Says HSUS Misleads Donors". 2001. *National Animal Interest Alliance Press Release*. <http://www.furcommission.com/news/newsF02j.htm>.

