

## The wild boar *Sus scrofa* L. as neighbor in an agricultural landscape – a new project

Herbst, C., Keuling, O.

Institute for Wildlife Research at the Veterinary Medicine University of Hannover, Foundation, Bischofsholer Damm 15, 30173 Hannover, Germany, coralieherbst@gmx.de

DOI: 10.5073/jka.2011.432.125

With the increasing and spreading of wild boar populations the damage in agricultural fields and the threat of diseases like European swine fever are on the rise. In case of an outbreak of European swine fever the damage to the domestic pig breeding may be billions of Euros for Germany alone. Therefore, farmers and veterinary authorities claim that regulation and reduction of the wild boar population is required.

A management system is necessary, which integrates the social structure and behavior of the wild boar with hunting. A new project that started in 2011 in northern Germany will test the reduction of game damage and reducing the risk of an outbreak of European swine fever by means of hunting management.

Radio-marked wild boar will give new information about movement patterns and habitat utilization in a landscape dominated by agriculture. Data will be used to detect age dependent differences among the wild boars causing damage. The role of the leading sow in a wild boar group will be considered to reveal how shooting of the leading sow may affect the group. A better understanding of her role in the process of dispersal and hence the increasing risk of spreading diseases is needed to develop a management approach based on game biology data.

Keywords: agriculturally dominated area, European swine fever, leading sow, spatial behavior, *Sus scrofa*