

## **Task Force announces details for feral hog bounty, food bank donations and additional feral swine management programs set for Caldwell and Hays County, TX**

LOCKHART – The Caldwell County Feral Hog Task Force (Task Force) has announced details for the five dollar feral hog bounty and other feral hog management programs including aerial control, wireless traps, a professional trapper and food bank donations set for Caldwell County and Hays County.

“The mission of the Task Force is ‘to monitor and reduce the economic and biological impact of feral hogs to our land, water and wildlife species in Caldwell County,’” said Plum Creek watershed coordinator, Nick Dornak, who has been with the group since its inception in January 2013.

“The Task Force is taking feral hog management to a new level by providing financial incentives, building coalitions and investing in the latest technologies for feral swine control. An agreement between commissioners from both Caldwell County and Hays County has allowed us to expand our reach. We now have representatives from both counties on our Leadership Committee,” Dornak added.

Funding from two Texas Department of Agriculture grants along with additional contributions from a coalition of local landowners, businesses, agricultural groups, environmental organizations, Hays County and Caldwell County have provided the necessary resources to implement year one of a “Feral Hog Action Plan for Caldwell and Hays County”, but the continued success and future development of programs will rely on donations from program participants and concerned citizens.

A five dollar per feral hog bounty program for Caldwell County and Hays County, which began on September 1, will run through the end of August 2014 or until funds are exhausted. Feral hog hunters and trappers may take tails from feral hogs harvested in Caldwell or Hays County to one of four bounty claim stations during business hours. Claim stations will also accept receipts from a TAHC Approved Holding Facility as proof of harvest. Claim stations include Caldwell County Farm and Ranch in Lockhart, Salt Flat Feed and Mercantile in Luling, King Feed in Wimberley and Triple S Feed in Dripping Springs.

In addition to providing technical assistance and financial incentives to local hunters, trappers and landowners, the Task Force has plans to launch a new website in November 2013 that will serve as a clearing house for information, and allow landowners to sign up for a variety of programs, as well as provide links to outside resources. Concerned citizens and program participants will also be able to make online, tax deductible donations to the Task Force.

“The Task Force is using every tool at its disposal to alleviate the destructive impact feral hogs are having on local landowners, from hog traps with the latest wireless technology, to 1,600 square foot drop nets that work remotely, to extensive aerial control, to hiring an experienced, local trapper that specializes in urban and suburban feral hog removal,” said Stuart Carter, a local landowner and Leadership Committee member.

There is no charge for landowners in Caldwell or Hays County to take part in Task Force programs. “We hope to run it all though voluntary donations,” Carter added.

The Task Force is also teaming with Ortiz Game Management to help feed the hungry with USDA inspected pork from feral swine through an agreement with a South Texas processing plant and the San Antonio Food Bank.

“You can bring live feral hogs to our facility south of New Braunfels, be paid by the pound, collect an additional five dollars per head through the bounty program, and help provide lean, nutritious, free range pork to the economically disadvantaged,” said R.A. “Bubba” Ortiz, owner of Ortiz Game Management and professional trapper.

Mr. Ortiz will also remove live, trapped feral hogs and issue bounty payments to landowners and trappers in Hays and Caldwell County. For individuals suffering from feral hog damage without the means to adequately harvest feral hogs on their own, Ortiz Game Management has been hired by the Task Force to provide professional services at no cost to the landowner.

For more information on how you can participate in Task Force programs in Caldwell and Hays County or to learn more about the feral hog action plan, go to <http://plumcreek.tamu.edu/feral-hogs/>. You can also email the Task Force at [ccfhtf@gmail.com](mailto:ccfhtf@gmail.com). Donations made payable to “Caldwell County Treasurer” may be mailed to P.O. Box 223, Lockhart, Texas, 78644. Please note “CCFHTF Donation” on your check.

<p><b>Caldwell / Hays County \$5 feral hog bounty claim stations. Bounty runs October 1, 2013 through August 31, 2014. Feral swine tails accepted in sealed plastic bags during business hours. Receipts from a Certified Holding Facility will also serve as proof of harvest.</b></p>			
<p><b>Caldwell County Farm &amp; Ranch</b> 519 N. Colorado St. Lockhart, TX 78644 (512) 398-2727</p>	<p><b>Salt Flat Feed &amp; Mercantile</b> 898 N. Magnolia Ave. Luling, TX 78648 (830) 875-8800</p>	<p><b>King Feed, Garden and Hardware</b> 14210 Ranch Road 12 Wimberley, TX 78676 (512) 847-2618</p>	<p><b>Triple S Feed</b> 2111 US Hwy 290 Dripping Springs, TX 78620 (512) 894-0344</p>

**Additional programs available to Caldwell / Hays County landowners through the Task Force. Sign up via email or in person at one of four bounty claim stations. Email requests to [ccfhtf@gmail.com](mailto:ccfhtf@gmail.com).**

<b><u>Special Programs</u></b>	<b><u>Suggested Donation (not required)</u></b>
Aerial Control	\$25 registration PLUS 10¢ per acre
Professional Trapping and Hunting Services	\$2 per harvested feral hog
30' and 17' corral traps with wireless technology	\$50 per month of use
40' Drop Net with wireless technology	\$50 per month of use
Volunteer hunters/trappers	Task force will work with landowners to match needs with volunteers

Current funding for the development of Caldwell County Feral Hog Task Force programs is through two Texas Department of Agriculture grants and financial and technical support from Caldwell County, Hays County, Caldwell County Farm Bureau, Hays County Farm Bureau, SH130 Concession Company, Plum Creek Conservation District, Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority, the Bastrop-Caldwell County Wildlife Management Association and local landowners.