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## **The New Zealand Pig Hunting Association** **Code of Conduct for Pig Hunting**

### **Background**

#### **1. The NZ Pig Hunting Association**

The goal of the NZPHA is to provide co-ordination and a collective voice at a National Level for the estimated 25,000 Pig Hunters and Hunting Clubs. The New Zealand Pig Hunting Association is an association of both formal pig hunting clubs and other pig hunting groups. The contribution that pig hunting makes to conservation, recreation and food gathering for many New Zealanders is enhanced by the existence of a national association. Recognising introduced species, such as wild pigs, and providing a conduit for hunters to have a formal role in their management is a key focus for the association.

#### **2. Code of Conduct**

One of our great hunting forefathers Aldo Leopold said that “a peculiar virtue in wildlife ethics is that the hunter ordinarily has no gallery to applaud or disapprove of his conduct. Whatever his act they are dictated by his own conscience, rather than by a mob of onlookers. It is difficult to exaggerate the importance of the fact.”

How we conduct ourselves when we hunt must be based on our own values and ethics. More so as we now find in this modern environment that we are all continually in the spotlight. The ability to hunt has always thought to have been a right in New Zealand. However, it is not. Hunting may be ingrained in what makes many of us New Zealanders, but it is actually a privilege that is bestowed on us by the rest of society. As we have seen from what has happened to some hunting activities overseas, this privilege can easily be taken away. It is therefore vitally important that hunting remains relevant to New Zealand society. How hunters are perceived is an important part of that relevance, and how hunters conduct themselves both in the field and within society is a major influence on how we are perceived.

The following code will guide hunters on how to conduct themselves when they engage in their hunting activities. This code will subsequently be translated into further information and training that will give hunters advice on how they can ensure they act within the code.

## **“The Pig Hunters Code”**

### **Animal Welfare**

- All hunters should have the appropriate facilities and finances for caring for and maintaining their hunting animals. (e.g. Dog housing or kennels, dog boxes for travel.)
- All hunters and hunting parties must carry the means to apply the necessary first aid to an injured dog.

### **Respect the Environment & Wildlife**

- Show respect for the wildlife you hunt by taking only clean, killing shots, then retrieving and properly handling your game. Take only what you will use.
- Hunters in New Zealand have a responsibility to conduct their method of hunting and animal harvest to the highest practicable standards of animal welfare with regard to minimising distress and suffering and to humanely kill animals being hunted.
- Pig Hunters should employ hunting methods that enable them to locate, catch and kill their pigs with the minimum of stress and suffering to the pig and the dog(s). This includes:
  - Ensuring that dogs are adequately trained so that they minimise any pain, suffering and damage to pigs caught. The use of captive pigs (i.e. a pig that has been restrained or is restricted by way of an enclosed/fenced area) to train holding dogs is not acceptable.
  - The use of legal tracking collars to assist with locating dogs and pigs as quickly as possible.
  - The use of mechanisms to protect dogs from injury whilst hunting pigs.
  - Ensuring hunters possess the skills to despatch all pigs humanely. They must carry this out as quickly as possible once the pig has been bailed or caught.
  - Giving consideration to the number of dogs being used. A maximum of four dogs per hunter or hunting party is recommended.
- Learn to tread lightly while afield. Use vehicles only on established roads and tracks, practice low-impact camping and travel.
- Report illegal activities immediately.
- All hunting should take place in a fair chase and escape situation.

### **Respect Property & Landowners**

- Always get permission to hunt on land.
- Close any gates you open, and never damage crops or property, including fences, outbuildings or livestock.

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- Ensure all dogs are adequately identified (by using methods such as microchipping), are stock and wildlife proof, and have the necessary inoculations.
- Do not leave offal or carcasses in the field. Where possible these should be buried or, at a minimum, hidden from view.
- Alert landowners or land managers about any problems you find on their property.
- Ensure you know the boundaries of the property you are hunting within.
- Have public liability insurance to cover any costs associated with unintentional damage to stock and property.

### **Show Consideration for Non-Hunters**

- Remember that the future of hunting depends on hunters and non-hunters alike. Be considerate of non-hunters' sensitivities and strive to leave them with positive images of hunting and hunters.
- Don't flaunt your kill or treat game carcasses in an offensive manner at any time, particularly during transport.
- Hunters should refrain from hanging skins, heads etc. in view of the general public.
- Be considerate of all outdoor users, including other hunters.
- Refrain from posting images on social media that could be deemed to be offensive.

### **Hunt Safely**

- Exercise caution at all times.
- Be a responsible and safe licenced firearms owner and user.
- Wear high visibility clothing whenever appropriate or required while afield.
- Hunters should know the area in which they are hunting and it is recommended that they carry a map of the area and a compass or GPS with the necessary knowledge on how to use all such tools.
- Always carry a Personal Locator Beacon (PLB), basic safety gear and a first aid kit as these could save the hunter's life or another hunter's life in the back country.
- Notify someone of your hunting plans and when you intend to return.
- **Remember that hunting and alcohol don't mix.**

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### **Know and Obey the Law**

- Those bound to the code of conduct acknowledge that they will not knowingly enter into activity against the Laws of NZ.
- Obtain proper permissions.
- Hunt only in allowed areas and during designated times and seasons.
- Obey any bag and possession limits.
- Use only legal hunting methods and equipment.

### **Support Game Management Wildlife & Habitat Conservation**

- Learn more about wildlife and habitat issues and urge policymakers to support strong game management and conservation initiatives.
- Become involved in game management and wildlife conservation organizations and their programs.

### **Pass on an Ethical Hunting Tradition**

- Set high ethical standards for future generations of hunters to help ensure hunting will continue.

### **Strive to Improve Outdoor Skills & Understanding of Wildlife**

- Know the limitations of your skills and equipment, and hunt within those limits.
- Improve your outdoor skills to become more observant, a better hunter, and a better teacher. Sight-in your firearm or bow, and practice shooting to ensure a clean kill in the field.
- Learn more about the habits and habitats of game and non-game wildlife and their management needs.

### **Hunt Only with Responsible and Ethical Hunters**

- Take pride in being a responsible and ethical hunter.
- Insist that your hunting partners behave in a responsible, ethical manner.