

Feral Pigs in the Shire of Chittering

The Shire of Chittering have a local law which prevents the keeping of pigs.

While the keeping of one pig may appear to be a harmless pursuit it is not. Currently, farmers in the Chittering Valley are suffering from an incursion of feral pigs which are tearing up grazing land, uprooting fruit trees and irrigation, undermining houses and have become increasingly bold. These pigs are generally escapees or deliberate releases by people who may be seeking to rid themselves of a problem (it's outgrown its pen) or for persons who wish to indulge themselves in a blood sport.

People who wish to keep a pig will generally acquire a piglet never expecting the thing to grow. It's cute when it is less than three kilos. By the time the pig is a year old you can expect to have an irritable animal of around 70 kilos, which can be quite vicious. If you are choosing to make it into bacon you won't be doing it much before this time. The prospect of the animal breaking down or going over a fence and chasing you is quite real. If you have small children you will have to ensure that they are watched at all times and do not enter the paddock or pen unsupervised.

If it doesn't succeed in catching you then it is quite possible for it to terrorise your neighbours, who by now will have been well and truly over the high pitched squeals and smells which have been emanating from your property during the year.

If the pig escapes from your property you have broken the law. The release of a pig (or indeed any other farm animal) leaves you open to prosecution under the Biosecurity and Animal Management Act administered by the Department of Agriculture and Food Western Australia.

There are reasons why these local laws have been made and they relate to the effect upon your neighbours, your health and biosecurity for our local industries. Feral pigs can carry a number of diseases and these can be transmitted to your free range pig during nocturnal visits.

Please be aware that it is not bloody mindedness that causes these laws to be written but to ensure the safety of people and our Western Australia farming industry.

