

Choosing a Hog Hunting Outfitter

LOW COUNTRY HUNTING LODGE

www.lowcountryhunting.com

Contrary to popular belief, wild hogs are not stupid or easy to kill. Many studies have shown that hogs are highly intelligent animals that can remember negative experiences such as being shot at. They also have an excellent sense of smell to find food from long distances away as well as to identify danger. This makes them extremely tough hunt, but a worthy quarry for the fair chase hunter. So, for the best chance at harvesting one of these great animals, we suggest hunters do their research before choosing an outfitter and utilize the following information to keep from wasting your hard earned money.

1. What kind of hunt is being offered?

- a) 100% Fair Chase Hunt, Low or High Fenced Hunt?
 - 100% Fair Chase Hunt the hogs are wild and are roaming freely in the wilderness. You are truly hunting these animals.
 - Low or High Fenced Hunt the hogs can't leave the hunting area no matter how much pressure you put on them. This eliminates a fair chase hunt by guaranteeing the hunter will harvest a pig.

2. Research the outfitter before booking your hunt.

- a) Contact the local Game Warden in the outfitter's area. If the outfitter has had problems in the past, they will know!
- b) Google the outfitter and look for them being mentioned in online reviews and hunting forums.
- c) You can also check with the Better Business Bureau regarding complaints against the outfitter.

3. Is the outfitter posting on their website and social media accounts?

- a) Most quality outfitters will post on their Website, Facebook or Instagram accounts with trail camera photos and successful hunters with their harvests.
 - This should give you an idea of how successful they have been at attracting game and placing their hunters on game.
 - If the outfitter hasn't been posting or doesn't post be suspicious of what they are offering.

4. Make sure your hog hunting outfitter doesn't over hunt their properties.

- a) How many hunters does the outfitter take per hunt or per week?
- b) Are there gaps between hunts to eliminate pressure? If so, how many days?
- c) The amount of acreage doesn't matter if the properties are managed correctly.
 - Whether its 100 acres or 10,000 acres if the outfitter is over hunting properties the hunting will never be great.
 - The only way to keep from over hunting properties is to reduce the hunting pressure. This is mostly accomplished by spacing out the hunts on the properties to give them a recovery period as well as limiting the number of hunters per day/week.

5. How does the outfitter choose the stand you will be hunting in?

- a) For the hunter to have any chance at harvesting a hog the stand must be chosen based on the wind direction.
 - Hogs live by their nose. If a hog smells something out of the ordinary (i.e. the hunter) they will not come out to the bait.

6. How are the hunters placed into their stands at the hunting locations?

- a) Are there rules in place for your safety!!!
 - Hunters should never be allowed to walk to any stand or out from any stand unattended. This is a very unsafe practice and puts the hunter's safety at risk of not finding the stand or worse wandering in front of another hunter.

7. How far apart will the hunters be placed?

- a) Hunters should be placed far enough apart to eliminate any unsafe hunting conditions as well as to not impact the success of the other hunters around them.
 - We suggest 400 yards apart.

8. What rules does the outfitter have in place to keep their stands productive?

- a) Keeping the hunting locations and bait as scent free as possible makes for better hunting and doesn't alert the animals to the presence of a hunter. Hunters getting out of the stand and walking around does!
- b) The quickest way to kill a hunting location is for the hunter to get out of the stand and wander around alerting the animals to their presence.

9. Wild Hogs are not territorial and will leave properties immediately if there is no food available or not enough food available.

- a) Are the stands baited?
- b) How often do you bait?
 - If you do not bait every day or put out enough to last for several days hogs will leave the properties in search of food.
- c) How do you bait?
 - Standing Feeders, Hand Pour, Truck Mounted Drop Feeders

10. How far are the shots going to be from the stands?

- a) Most hunters are comfortable in shooting from 25 yards to 150 yards at a target.
- b) Normally feeders or bait piles are placed within this range to give the hunter a better opportunity at harvesting an animal.
 - The optimal range for hogs and deer with a rifle is between 75 to 150 yards. Anything closer than this greatly increases the chance of the hunter being detected.
 - Anything past 150 yards from the stands greatly increases the hunter's chance at wounding or missing the animal.

11. What's their recover process for a downed or wounded animal?

- a) Do they use scent eliminating sprays before exiting the vehicle and searching for your animal?
 - While scent elimination sprays aren't 100% effective any step that helps eliminate as much human scent as possible and keeps the hunting

location productive allows the hogs to return to their normal patterns more quickly.

- b) Are more than the guide and hunter allowed to participate in the recovery?
 - The less people participating in the recovery the better. The more disturbances made during the recovery the longer it will take the stand to recover and the hogs to return.

12. Do you hunt hogs in the morning?

- a) Hogs are mostly nocturnal animals and move mostly during the last hour before dark and throughout the night. Rarely do they move during the mornings or midday. Our records have shown that on a 100% Fair Chase Hunt less than 2% of hogs have been harvested during the morning hunts. There are exceptions to this to this, when the weather gets really cold and the natural food sources in the woods start to get eliminated it will make the hogs hit the feeders or bait piles slightly more often in the mornings.

13. How big do your hogs get?

- a) Average wild hogs on a fair chase hunt will weigh between 5 pounds and 250 pounds, but occasionally you will get one that runs around 300 pounds.
 - Anything much over this on a fair chase hunt is a released farm hog. It will have big floppy ears, shorter nose and look like a farm hog.

14. How many hogs can you harvest?

- a) 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 or more per day?
 - If the outfitter is allowing more than 1 or 2 hogs per day it's an advertising ploy or a low/high fenced hunting operation where you pay extra for each hog that is killed.
 - Realistically, a hunter on a 100% fair chase hunt should have at least 1 opportunity on a normal hunt to harvest a hog. But, if it is a true 100% Fair chase hunt the outfitter can't control the animal movement, weather, or what you will harvest. They can only put you in the best possible position to make your hunt a successful one. It's called hunting and not killing!

15. Does the outfitter promote their success rate, guarantee you will harvest a hog or advertise all you can kill we are overrun with hogs?

- a) Advertising a 100% success rate?
 - Our records show that hunters usually kill 50% to 60% of the hogs they shoot at. The rest are missed or wounded.
- b) Guarantee you will harvest a hog?
 - This will be low or high fenced hunting operation where they charge per hog and don't care what you can harvest. They can always buy more hogs to release.
 - On a 100% fair chase it's not reasonable to expect to harvest more than 1 or 2 hogs on a hunt. If the outfitter allows more than 1 or 2 hogs per hunt it drastically increases the chance the properties are over hunted and the hogs will leave for good.
- c) All you can kill, we are overrun with hogs?
 - Again, a low or high fenced hunting operation or it's an extermination hunt by stalking farm fields.
 - Outfitters usually limit the number of hogs you can harvest from 1 to 2 to keep the pressure down and make the hunting better for your hunt and

future hunts. Anything greater than this is blowing up the hunting location and ruining the hunt for the next group.

16. Are there any extras not listed?

- a) Skinning Fees.
- b) Skinning Fees with a per pound price.
 - Be aware of this!
- c) Guide Fees.
 - Be leery of an outfitter who demands a guide tip up front!
- d) Lodging Fees.
- e) Meal Fees.
- f) Trophy Fees.
- g) Minimum Harvest Requirements.
 - Fines for not harvesting the minimum.

17. Is the lodge that's pictured on the website or in the brochure the one you will be staying at?

- a) Some outfitters have multiple lodges and charge an additional fee to stay at the main lodge pictured on their website or brochure.

18. Don't judge an outfitter just by the display of heads in his expo booth.

- a) They may or may not be a good representation of what they have to offer.

19. Does the outfitter send out a confirmation letter after you book your hunt?

- a) After you book your hunt, you should receive a confirmation letter from the outfitter via mail or via email outlining the hunt you have booked, cost, payment, what's still owed, information regarding licenses, tags, permits, what to bring or pack, directions, etc..

20. How much experience do your guides have?

- a) Guides should be very knowledgeable about the animals you are hunting as well as the land they are hunting on. They should also be able to instruct their hunters on how to better their opportunity to harvest an animal while hunting.

21. If you are night hunting with an outfitter what is provided?

- a) Do they provide the rifle, night vision scope or thermal scope?
- b) Is there a charge for the use of the equipment?
- c) Do they hunt with green lights or red lights?
 - Hogs are very intelligent animals. Once they have been shot at while using a green light or red light the chance they will run immediately the next time a light is placed on them is greatly increased.