

## EAT LIKE A PIG?

Pigs eat grains, like corn, barley, and soybeans, mixed in with vitamins and minerals. It is often mixed all together and comes in a pellet, kind of like dog food. Scientific research has helped farmers know the exact amount and type of food a pig needs as it grows.

## DID YOU SAY SHOWER?

Some farmers might ask you to shower or put on plastic boots over your shoes before you go into their barn. Other farms do not allow any visitors. The reason is biosecurity, and it's one part of a herd health program that keeps pigs healthy. Not allowing visitors into the barn helps to keep germs and sickness out. Farmers give their pigs medicine when they are sick, but prefer prevention over treatment.

## SWEAT LIKE A PIG?

Guess what? Pigs don't sweat! Cartoon pigs are often shown in the mud to keep cool, but real pigs actually like to keep clean. Today's pig barns are kept cool in the summer and warm in the winter. Barns have fans and some even have sprinklers to help keep pigs cool.

*For more information on pig farming visit:*



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ALBERTA PORK  
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## WE CARE

Pig farming is a living, a life and so much more.



Meet Teresa, she's an Ontario pig farmer. Her family markets 15,000 animals a year. This is what she has to say about her farm.

1

### What's your favourite thing about being a farmer?

It's hard to pick just one thing. Through our hard work we are able to provide healthy food to Canadians. Being a farmer allows me the opportunity to answer questions about how food is grown. It's a lifestyle that I love because it allows me to work closely with my family in an industry that continues to grow.

2

### What do your pigs eat?

We feed corn, soymeal, whey and a premix with vitamins and minerals. We use a nutritionist to help us balance our pigs' diet.

3

### What do you do on a typical day on your farm?

My husband and son take care of the day-to-day raising and care of our pigs. I deliver our pork to customers, or help them pick it up at the farm. I also talk to people about food and farming and enjoy teaching them about what we do and why we do it.

4

### What's one thing you want Canadians to know about pigs?

Our family is proud to help feed Canadians and the world by providing safe, healthy and nutritious pork from our farm to their table.

# PIG BASICS

Everything you ever needed to know about pigs  
...but didn't know who to ask!

Most Canadians are not farmers (98%), but many know someone who produces, sells, or buys or simply love pork. The great news is that farmers want to share their story and talk about how they raise their pigs and the pork you eat.

## WHAT'S THE WORD IN THE BARN?

Let's get familiar with some words you might hear a farmer use when talking about their pigs.

**BARROW:** A male pig that has been neutered

**BOAR:** An adult male that has not been neutered

**FARROW:** To give birth

**FEEDER PIG:** Piglet after it's weaned from the sow, also known as 'weaner' pig

**GILT:** A female pig that has never farrowed

**LITTER:** A group of piglets born at one time from the same sow

**MARKET HOG:** A barrow or gilt raised for meat production, weighs up to 110 kg

**PIGLET:** Newborn pig, weighs 1-2 kg

**PORK PRODUCERS:** Farmers, the people that raise pigs

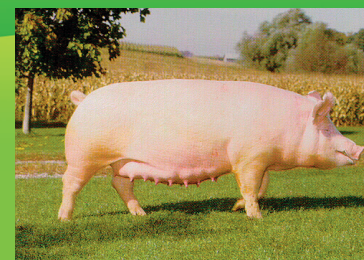
**RUNT:** Smallest piglet in the litter

**SOW:** Adult female pig

## PIGS OF MANY COLOURS

Pigs come in different breeds. Some are big, some are small, and some are white while others can be pink or black. Most pigs raised today are a combination of two or three different breeds that have the best qualities.

Here are a few common breeds that can be found on most Canadian farms:



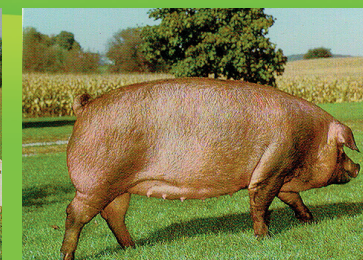
### Yorkshire

This is the most popular breed of pig in Canada. They are known to grow quickly, have lots of piglets, and produce very lean, high quality pork.



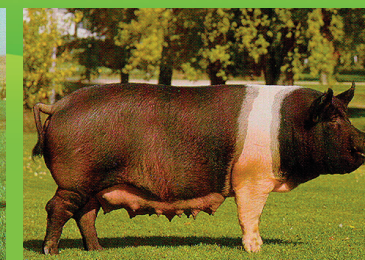
### Landrace

These pigs are large, muscular, white colour, with droopy ears. They are known for their strong maternal abilities and adapting to different climates.



### Duroc

The Canadian Duroc is a solid red pig, known for fast growth, stamina and high quality meat products.



### Hampshire

These pigs are black and white, known for fast growth, muscling, and really lean pork.



# THE LIFE OF A PIG

Pigs have a very unique lifestyle compared to many other farm animals raised in Canada.



**BIRTH** – A sow's gestation (pregnancy) lasts for about three months, three weeks and three days. On average a sow will have 8 to 12 piglets in a litter. Typically she will give birth twice a year.

**SLATTED FLOORS** – Allow manure and urine to fall through to keep the pens and pigs clean and dry.



**NURSERY** – When the piglets are weaned from the sow they move to the nursery barn where they are fed a grain based feed in the form of a pellet and usually kept in groups in a warm barn. The piglets are grouped based on their size. This is important otherwise bigger piglets may bully smaller ones and injure them.

**FARROWING PEN** – This pen is designed to keep the sow and piglets safe while they are nursing. Sows nurse their piglets for two to four weeks, until the piglets are weaned from milk and begin to eat a solid based diet.



**GROWER-FINISHER** – Pigs are moved into another barn when they reach 25 kg. They are fed a specific diet and are raised until they reach 110 kg. These are the pigs that supply us with pork.



**BREEDING STOCK** – Farmers select the pigs with the best genetics and most desirable traits to stay on the farm to add to their herd or replace existing pigs.



**TRUCKING** – Market hogs are sent to processing plants on trucks designed just for pigs. There are rules and regulations for transporting pigs in Canada, including how many pigs can go on each truck.

**MARKET** – Each animal is inspected, and quickly and humanely euthanized at the processing plant. They must follow strict government guidelines for processing and handling animals.



## HOUSES OF STRAW, STICK OR BRICKS?

Contrary to the movies, pigs in Canada live in barns, not outside in the mud. Why you ask? Barns are designed to provide pigs with the ideal environment. Barns protect them from extreme hot and cold weather, predators, and disease.

