

# Swine Care Basics

## AN INFOGRAPHIC FOR SWINE OWNERS

### Vital Signs

Temperature: 101.5-102.5 degrees Fahrenheit

Resting Heart Rate:  
adult: 70-80 beats/minute  
growing: 70-90 beats/minute

Resting Respiration Rate:  
adult: 13-18 breaths/minute  
growing: 25-40 breaths per minute

Swine require at least 1/10 Acre per animal








### Monogastrics

- Simple, one chambered stomach, similar to the human stomach
- Typically, swine will eat a dry pelleted feed- cereal grains are ground and mixed with other dry ingredients to make a complete feed

### Nutritional Requirements

- Rations are balanced to meet the animal's needs.
- Pigs require essential amino acid balance not just crude protein %.
- Growing animals are typically fed free choice while adults are fed by size and body condition.
- Lactating sows require higher rates of protein and energy than gestating sows and will need supplementation.
- Younger animals need higher levels of protein.

#### BODY CONDITION SCORING

Image					
Score	1	2	3	4	5
Condition	Emaciated	Thin	Ideal	Fat	Obese
Detection of Ribs, Back Bone, "H" Bones and Pin Bones	Obvious	Easily detected with pressure	Barely felt with firm pressure	None	None

*Taken from "Assessing Sow Body Condition" by R.D.Coffey, G.R. Parker, and K.M. Laurent (ASC-158; 1999)*

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### Reproduction:

- Gestation length: 114 days or 3 months, 3 weeks and 3 days
- Sows average 8-12 pigs/litter
- Gilts are bred for the first time around 6 months of age
- Gilts come into heat every 21 days
- Sows will come into heat 3-7 days after weaning

### Other:

#### Terminology

Sow - adult female that has had piglets

Boar - intact adult male

Gilt - young female that has not had piglets

Barrow - castrated male

Pig or Piglet - very young (baby) swine

Hog - domestic swine grown for slaughter

Terminal vs maternal breeds. Different breeds have varying carcass characteristics and suitability for pasture. Research what fits best with your system.

### Marketing:

There are several marketing options for selling pork. Live animal sales are less common than selling meat.

- Livestock Sales
- Private Treaty/On Farm Sales - Piglets or Breeding Animals
- Selling Meat Cuts- Retail or Wholesale
- If transporting live animals on state roads, they must have tags provided or approved by the NCDA.



Piglet  
2-4 lbs at  
birth



Feeder Pig  
40-60 lbs  
2 months



Finished Market Hog  
250-280  
6 months