

Feeding Your Pigs Outdoors

You can raise pigs on a variety of feeds, as long as you meet the nutritional requirements for different ages and sizes pigs. Poorly balanced diets result in pigs that get sick more easily, grow slowly, convert feed inefficiently, and produce a poorer quality carcass (e.g. too fat, low muscle mass). If you plan to make your own feed, there are number of things you need to consider.

You will have to feed you pigs every day, with the amount of feed they require being dependent on their breed, age, sex, stage of growth, condition, type of ingredients used, and season. Growing pigs should ideally have access to feed 24 hours a day.

Pigs fed on pasture still require supplemental feed to maintain health and ensure proper growth and development. It is also important to know that it is illegal to feed any meat or meat products to your pigs. This is one reason not to feed table scraps.



Complete Feeds

- Designed to meet the pig's nutritional requirements, usually purchased from a feed mill.
- Different diets/feeds will be required for different stages of growth - your feed company can assist you with this.
- Simplest approach with your pigs having the best growth, but is more expensive up front.

Grain-Based Homemade Feeds

- Diets consist of a single grain (e.g. wheat or barley) or multiple grains (e.g. wheat/barley/peas/ lentils) with or without by-products (distillers, screenings).
- Additional vitamin/mineral supplement is required to meet the pig's nutritional requirements. Vitamin/mineral supplements are available at your feed company.
- Diets tend to be cheaper than complete feeds; however, pigs will also tend to grow more slowly.

Produce-Based Homemade Feeds

- Produce (fruits and vegetables) may provide a low-cost opportunity to feed you pigs.
- These diets require a very specific vitamin/mineral supplement to meet the pig's nutritional requirements.
- When using produce, you must ensure it has never entered a kitchen or has been in contact with meat or products of animal origin. Typically, supermarket or market garden leftovers provide a viable option for sourcing these types of products.
- DO NOT feed food/table scraps to avoid contamination with meat products. Feeding any product that contains meat or meat products is illegal in Canada.



You can find more information on feeding, feeder design, alternative ingredients and feed safety - along with other topics on outdoor pig production at **smallscalepigfarming.com**.

FEEDERS

- One feeder space (minimum 15 inches wide) for 13-18 pigs.
- Weather and pest resistant.
- Accessible for all pigs regardless of size. Feeder openings large enough for the biggest pig to eat.
- Hinged covers on feed bunks protects feed from pests, other animals, weather, and allow pigs to open with their snouts.
- Avoid feces and urine contamination – clean feeders regularly.
- Locate feeders near the pen walls/fences it will let you feed your pigs (when feeding few pigs) without getting in the pen.



Feed Safety Tips

- Avoid feeding mouldy grain and diets, it can severely impact pig growth and health.
- Clean up feed spills immediately. Spills will attract pests and wild animals.
- Do not feed meat scraps and avoid purchasing feed from unknown sources.
- Store feed in a dry and secure area.

WATER

- Pigs require more water as they grow. Pigs consume approximately 10% of their body weight each day in water.
- Ensure clean water is always available and easily accessible, preferably at multiple locations.
- Avoid surface water - it will attract rodents and birds and can become contaminated.
- If using tubs, buckets, or troughs, ensure they are cleaned as in order to avoid contamination.
- Avoid manure contamination and separate from wallows.
- Pigs consume approximately three times more water than feed.





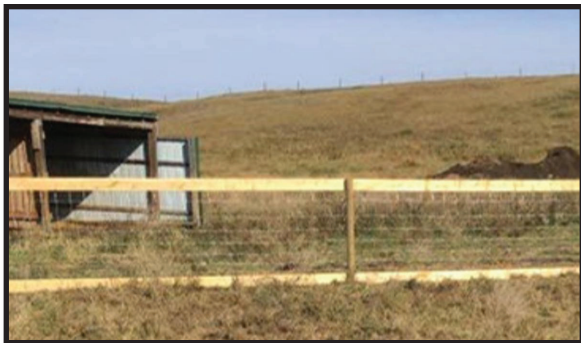
RAISING PIGS ON PASTURE

Raising pigs on pasture requires supplemental feed to ensure your pigs receive adequate nutrition, as pasture alone is not sufficient to meet the pig's nutritional needs. Other things to consider should be the adoption of rotational grazing, if done properly, this can improve pasture and pig performance. Pigs raised outdoors are more susceptible to parasite infection and can potentially cause a food safety risk, therefore managing parasite and pathogen load is essential for the success of outdoor pig production.



- Select forage varieties specific for pigs.
- Rooting destroys pasture.
- Pasture rotation is key to reduce pasture damage, erosion, and parasite risk.
- Some pig breeds are better suited for pasture production (Kunekune).
- The longer pigs stay in one area, the greater the risk of pasture deterioration.
- Rotation allows for adequate vegetation regrowth and avoids excessive damage to the forage stand.

Fencing



- Give strong consideration to your fencing options prior to bringing pigs home, as pigs can be escape artists.
- Escaped pigs can form wild populations that heighten other pig farms' disease risk.
- Ensure perimeter fencing is properly designed, constructed, and maintained. Doing this will make your experience in raising pigs more enjoyable.
- Monitor and maintain fences, specifically looking for weak spots when using page wire, wood, or mesh fences.

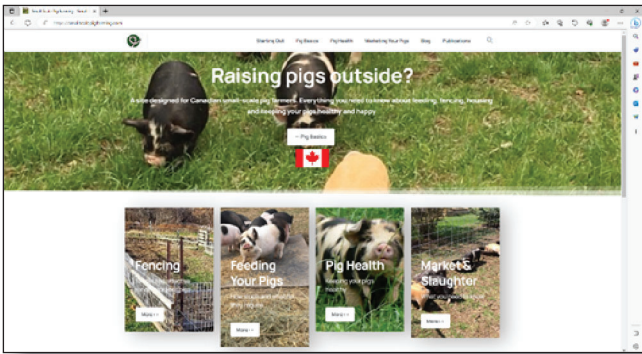
Shelters

- Provide a dry nesting area and shade, it minimizes the impact of bad weather (rain, snow, sun).
- Big enough to ensure all pigs have access at the same time, comfortable and not lying on top of one another.
- Pigs can be very destructive. Shelters need to be built solid to avoid damage to the shelter and injury to the pigs. Construct the sturdiest structure possible





Pig weight / age	Feed Requirement per day/per pig	Protein Content of Feed
Gilts	After six months of age feed to 2-3 % body weight per day. A 170 kg gilt requires 4.25 kg (170 x 2.5%) per day	15-16% protein
Gestating Sows	Feed to 1.5% of body weight per day. A 200 kg sow requires 3 kg of feed/day.	13% protein
Lactating Sows	Feed to 2.0% of body weight per day plus 0.5 kg for each piglet nursing. A 200 kg sow with 5 nursing piglets requires (4 + 2.5) 6.5 kg of feed/day.	15-16% protein
Boars	Feed to 2.0 % of body weight per day. A 300 kg boar requires 6 kg of feed/day.	13% protein
18kg (40lbs) pig (8 weeks of age)	0.7 - 0.9kg (1.5 – 2 lbs)	18% protein
35kg (75 lbs) (12 weeks of age)	1.1 – 1.35kg (2.5-3 lbs)	16% protein
55 – 60kg (125 lbs) (16 weeks of age)	1.8 – 2.3kg (4- 5 lbs)	16% protein
80kg (175 lbs)	1.8 – 2.3kg (4- 5 lbs)	15% protein
110 – 115kg (250lbs)	Gradually increase feed so pigs are getting 2.7 – 3.2kg (6-7 lbs) per day	14-15% protein



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A collaborative effort, designed to provide outdoor pig producers essential information on health, food safety, nutrition and other topics.