

# PIG BASICS

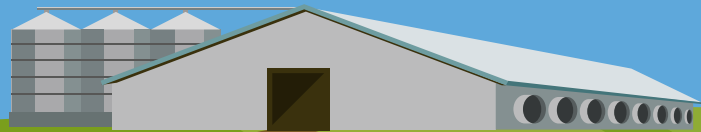
## EVERYTHING YOU EVER WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT PIGS... BUT DIDN'T KNOW WHO TO ASK.

Most Canadians (98%) are not farmers and may not know what happens on a Manitoba hog farm. The good news is that farmers want to share their story and talk about how they raise their pigs and produce the pork you eat.

### WHAT'S THE WORD IN THE BARN?

Discover some of the words you need to know to get around a hog farm.

<b>BIOSECURITY</b>	Actions taken to protect pigs from disease
<b>BOAR</b>	An adult male pig that fathers piglets
<b>MARKET HOG</b>	A pig raised for meat; weighs about 275 pounds
<b>GILT</b>	A young female pig that has never given birth
<b>SOW</b>	A mother pig
<b>WEANLING</b>	A piglet that has grown from drinking its mother's milk to eating solid food
<b>FARROWING</b>	The birthing of piglets
<b>LITTER</b>	A group of piglets born at one time to the same sow



### PIGS OF MANY COLOURS

There are different breeds of pigs. Some are big, some are small, and some are white, while others can be pink or black. The 4 most popular breeds of pigs on Manitoba farms are the Yorkshire, Duroc, Hampshire, and Landrace.



**YORKSHIRE**



**DUROC**



**HAMPSHIRE**



**LANDRACE**

# MARKET TO MARKET

Pigs have different needs at each stage of life. Let's explore how pigs are cared for on Manitoba farms.



## 1 HOME SWEET HOME

Raising pigs indoors protects them from the sun, extreme weather, and other dangers. Barns provide pigs with shelter and a healthy, comfortable environment in which to grow.

## 2 FARROWING BARN

Pregnant sows are moved to the farrowing barn a few days before they are due to give birth. Individual farrowing pens provide sows with comfort and privacy for their arriving litters. Sows and piglets are monitored during and after farrowing to ensure that their comfort, safety, and health is maintained.



## 3 FEEDER BARN

After leaving the nursery, pigs are moved to the feeder barn for 3-4 months. Feeder pigs choose how much to eat and usually consume 5-6 pounds of feed daily. These pigs remain in the feeder barn until they reach market weight – about 275 pounds.



## 2 BIRTH

A sow's pregnancy lasts three months, three weeks, and three days, or about 115 days. Just remember 3-3-3. A healthy sow will have at least 2 litters per year, farrowing an average of 12 piglets per litter.



The first food piglets receive is their mother's milk. The milk produced on the first day, called colostrum, is full of nutrients and important antibodies which enhance the immunity of newborn piglets.



## 4 NURSERY BARN

At 3-4 weeks of age, piglets are moved to the nursery barn. Here, they are housed in group pens with pigs of the same size and age for 5-8 weeks. While in the nursery, pigs from different litters get to socialize with each other for the first time.



## 6 FARM TO MARKET

Pigs go to market in specially designed trucks. There are strict rules for transporting pigs and all drivers are well trained to handle, care for, and transport the pigs. When market hogs arrive at the processing plant, employees must follow strict government guidelines for processing and handling the animals.



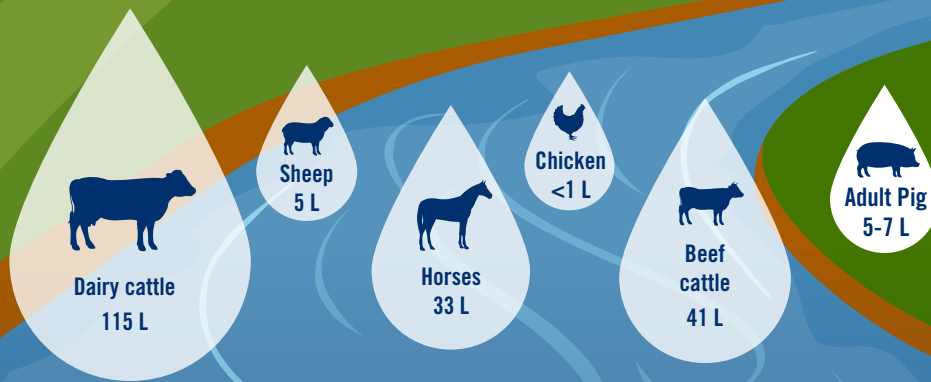


## EAT LIKE A PIG?

Farmers feed pigs a high quality, grain-based diet consisting mainly of corn and soymeal. Scientific research has helped farmers know the exact amount and type of food pigs need as they grow. Weanlings eat about 2 pounds of feed pellets per day – that’s the same amount as 33 bowls of cereal!

## DID YOU SAY SHOWER?

Farmers protect their animals from disease by following strict herd health procedures called biosecurity. One common biosecurity measure is showering. Most farms allow few visitors into their barns because humans carry germs that can make pigs sick. Everyone allowed to enter a hog barn, including the farmer, should shower first. Good farm biosecurity = successful farming.



## A DROP IN THE BUCKET

An adult pig drinks 5-7 litres of water daily. That’s about the same amount of water it takes to wash your hands with the tap running.

## WE’RE PORK PROUD

Hog farmers care for their animals 365 days a year, including holidays! Maintaining pig health is a farmer’s pride and passion.

Meet Andrea, a barn manager in Winkler, Manitoba. Andrea has worked in the hog sector for over 20 years, and she loves what she does! This is what Andrea has to say about working on a hog farm.



- Why did you choose a career in the hog sector?** I grew up on a farm and helped with my family’s small herd of pigs from a very young age. I received a college diploma in animal health technology, followed by a long, diverse career doing what I love; which is working hard to raise healthy, content pigs every single day.
- What do you enjoy most about your job?** The thing I enjoy most is being able to work with the animals every day. It’s satisfying to watch the pigs grow knowing that we’ve done our best to ensure they remain healthy and have a good life.
- What types of rules do Manitoba hog farms follow?** The hog sector has very high standards when it comes to the health and well-being of pigs. Transportation, living, and health standards are very well documented, and we are always working to improve them.
- What is your favourite cut of pork?** My family and I are huge fans of ribs. That’s our favourite cut, hands down!

To learn more about how pigs are raised, go to [manitobapork.com](http://manitobapork.com)

