

# PIGS

## Feeding: Food, Water, And Related Health Issues

### What a pig needs in its feed

- Starchy crops such as breadfruit, cassava and sweet potato are rich in carbohydrates and are important sources of energy.
- Meat meal, fish meal, coconut meal and palm kernel cake are protein rich foods.
- Coconuts, coconut meal, palm kernel cake and tallow are high in fats, which also provide energy.
- Fresh leaves, coloured fruits and vegetables are a good source of vitamins and minerals.
- Waste vegetables and household scraps (swill) can be given to pigs. Household scraps, especially those containing meat, must be boiled before they can be fed to pigs.

### Feeding

Pigs kept in a pigsty (house or pen) need to be given all of their feed requirements every day. To meet their daily feed requirements, pigs should be fed twice a day, once in the morning and once in the evening. If pigs are given more than enough to meet their daily feed requirements, they can be fed once a day. Pigs that are foraging for food in the field can be offered one meal a day of extra feed. They can also be given more feed, for example vegetable waste or swill, when it is available.

Note: A pig should rush to eat its food. A lack of interest in food is a sign of ill health in pigs, and you will need to examine the animal to determine the cause of its health problems.

### *Suggested daily feed allowances for pigs*

### Water

Pigs must always have access to fresh, clean water. Pigs will drink more water during hot weather.



## HOUSING FOR PIGS

### Keeping pigs in a field

Wild pigs shelter in bushes and the roots of trees. Pigs do better if they are given a suitable shelter to lie and sleep in, as they would do in the wild.

- Pigs can be kept in a field where they can feed on grasses and plants. The field must be surrounded by a strong fence or a wall. Pigs will push their way out of a field if the fence is not strong enough.
- Pigs in a field should be given shelter to sleep in. The shelters are called pig arks or kennels. They can be made of wood or metal sheets.
- Arks should contain bedding, made of wood shavings, dry grass or coconut leaves.
- Arks should be moved to fresh ground when the areas around them become muddy.
- Pigs should have access to shade so they do not get sunburned.

### Housing and pens for pigs

Pigs can also be kept in a pigsty, either alone or in small groups.

- Choose an area that never floods in the rainy season.
- Do not build the pigsty near houses as smells and flies can become a nuisance.
- The pigsty should be a pen with a concrete or solid floor and a low shelter.
- Make the concrete floor slope away from the pig's sleeping area. This allows the urine to flow away.
- Lay the floor on a good foundation that is 5–6 cm (2 in.) thick. If the concrete is too thin and cracks, the pigs will soon start to dig it up.
- Do not use an earthen floor. It cannot be kept clean and will lead to problems with parasites and other diseases. The pigs will dig the floor up.
- The walls of the pigsty need to be fairly smooth so that they can be kept clean. Germs can grow in dirt that gets into cracks in the walls.
- Make sure there is plenty of bedding in the shelter.
- Remove the dung every day. Pigs always drop dung away from their sleeping and feeding areas. This makes it easy to collect.
- The dung can be composted, used in a digester to make gas for cooking, or deposited in fish ponds
- Avoid washing waste into lagoons or other waterways.

### Who can farmers contact for further information?

Farmers may contact staff of the local Ministry of Agriculture or SPC Land Resources Division staff. For additional technical assistance, contact the SPC Land Resources Division at: [gibsons@spc.int](mailto:gibsons@spc.int)

