

PORK & PIGS



@ontariopork
ontariopork.on.ca/faq

**ANSWERS TO YOUR
COMMON QUESTIONS**



Where does my bacon come from?

Ontario pork is real food raised by real farm families. Ontario has about **1,200 pig farmers**, who send approximately **5.5 million hogs** to market each year.

It's a diverse group of dedicated people ranging from small hobby farms to large family-owned operations with many employees.

Most pigs raised in Ontario are crossbred, often combining Landrace, Yorkshire and Duroc breeds. Some farmers raise heritage breeds including Berkshire, Tamworth, Mangalitsa and Wild Boar.

Farmers raise animals under a variety of programs, including conventional, antibiotic-free or organic.

How do I know the meat I eat is safe?

Growth hormones aren't used in pigs raised in Canada. Farmers know that **antibiotics are important for human and animal health** and work closely with veterinarians to treat and prevent illness with antibiotics. The Canadian Food Inspection Agency conducts tests at processing plants to make sure that pork is healthy and safe for consumption.

Did you know?

More than **170,000 tonnes** of pork are exported annually, to countries including the United States, China and Japan.



What do pigs eat?

Swine diets are carefully formulated to meet each pig's nutritional needs. Ontario farmers feed pigs a **high-quality, grain-based diet** consisting mainly of crops such as barley, wheat and corn, which provide pigs with energy, and soybeans and canola meal for protein. Farmers add vitamins and minerals to the feed of newly-weaned pigs for optimum nutrition. Clean, fresh water is an essential part of a pig's diet.

Why do we ear tag and track pig movements?

Pig traceability is an important animal health and food safety system that enables precise and rapid emergency response to protect livestock, producers and consumers. **PigTrace** is the industry-led, national swine traceability initiative delivered by the Canadian Pork Council and Ontario Pork and enforced by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency.

Transportation

Ontario pork producers are devoted to caring for and raising their pigs. They want to ensure they are always **handled and transported safely and humanely**. Transporters are trained to handle the animals safely and with minimal stress. They adhere to strict guidelines set up by the Canadian government.

All farmers that ship to federally inspected plants are part of national quality assurance programs (Canadian Quality Assurance or Canadian Pork Excellence), which verify that animal care, food safety and traceability requirements are met.

Keeping pigs safe

Most **pigs are now raised indoors** where they benefit from individualized care and improved health. Barns provide pigs with shelter and a healthy, comfortable environment in which to grow. Farmers protect their animals from disease by following strict herd health procedures. Today's pigs are **raised with fewer diseases**, resulting in healthier pigs and a safer food supply.

Biosecurity

Farmers take biosecurity very seriously. It's how they keep their animals healthy. Today's biosecurity practices – like **showering and changing clothes** before entering a barn – help reduce the need for antibiotics by preventing the introduction of disease within a herd or the spread of disease between herds.



Are pigs humanely raised?

Yes! Raising healthy animals isn't just the right thing to do – it's also good business. Farmers always look for ways to improve how they care for their animals – how they're housed, raised, fed and moved. For example, under Canada's Pig Code guidelines, barns rebuilt or built now **need to provide loose housing** for sows. This is just one of the many ways farmers demonstrate their commitment to animal care.



The pork industry in Ontario from farm-to-fork generates about **13,000 full-time jobs** each year. Jobs range from hands-on animal care to high-skilled high-tech and even research. Farmers are responsible for the daily care and management of pigs raised for the pork industry. Every day is different from the last and farmers today need to have a toolbox filled with a diverse range of skills to help their business run smoothly. On top of the daily duties required to care for the pigs, farmers may also need to preform breeding duties such as artificial insemination, coordinate waste removal, perform facility maintenance and assist with births. Many pig farmers also grow their own crops. It's not an easy job. **Farmers work 365 days a year**, but they do it because they love it and are committed to providing safe, high-quality and delicious pork for consumers.



You don't need to work in a barn to be a part of the vibrant pork industry. Pig farmers work closely with large animal veterinarians, animal nutritionists and livestock feed sales representatives. You could also contribute to the industry by working in transportation, at a production facility, in genetics or even being a part of a research team looking to find innovative ways to better care for animals and help grow the industry.

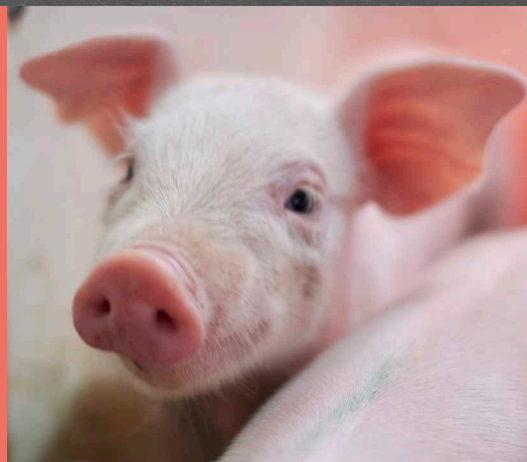


How has farming changed in the last 50 years?

New technologies, consumer preferences and economic factors all impact the ways we shop, eat and spend our time. **Farming has changed too.** There are fewer farms and more people to feed. That means farmers need to **raise their animals and crops more efficiently.** What hasn't changed is farmers' commitment to caring for their animals, their land and the people who depend on them.

Did you know?

Raising a single type of animal – pigs for example – allows farmers to **focus their farming.** Investing in technology and research helps farmers find new and better ways to care for their animals – while ensuring the food they produce is healthy and safe.



Does pig farming have an environmental impact?

Farmers are **environmental leaders, actively working to improve the environment**. Long-term success relies on clean water and healthy soil. From a producer's perspective, doing what's right for the environment is more than just good business. The farm is their family's home and the land is their livelihood.

From barn to field operations, pork producers abide by the requirements of a wide variety of environmental laws, including the;

- Environmental Protection Act
- Nutrient Management Act
- Lakes and Rivers Improvement Act
- Ontario Water Resources Act
- Drainage Act
- Endangered Species Act
- Pesticides Act
- Clean Water Act
- Source Water Protection Plans
- Great Lakes Protection Act

Ontario's Carbon Footprint

in comparison
(tonnes CO₂)



2.5 M

Pork Production



11.3 M

Electricity Generation



22.6 M

Household Automobiles



Where does all the poop go?

Pig manure is an organic fertilizer **used by farmers for over 10,000 years** to build and maintain soil health. When manure is used to enrich soil, farmers use less synthetic, imported or non-renewable fertilizer.

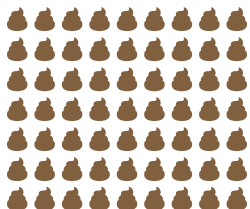
Pigs manure falls between slatted barn floors and is pumped from holding tanks into a storage facility. The manure is transferred to an applicator pulled by a tractor. The applicator injects the manure about 10-15 cm into the soil so it can **feed the roots of crops** but not run off into our lakes and waterways.

HOW MUCH POOP ARE

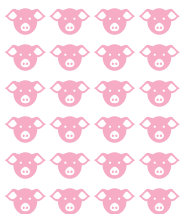
24 PIGLETS

=

30,000 L OF POOP



**1 SOW =
24 PIGLETS
/ YEAR**



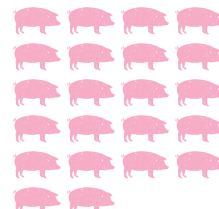
WE TALKING ABOUT?

**30,000 L OF POOP GROWS
4,700 KG OF CORN**



**4,700 KG OF CORN FEEDS
22 PIGS**

(or makes 117,500 bags of popcorn)





Is pork a healthy option?

Absolutely! Pork contains 13 essential nutrients that help keep you healthy and strong. It's high in protein, which helps:



Boost energy levels



Feel full longer



Build and repair body tissue



Develop antibodies and strong muscles



Support the absorption of nutrients

Cuts like pork tenderloin are low in fat. Plus, pork is **naturally low in calories** and packed with nutrients including iron and B-vitamins.

Did you know?

Pork tenderloin is as lean as boneless, skinless chicken breast.

TIP! Swap processed foods and empty calories for whole grains and vegetables – rather than reducing meat consumption.

Do Canadians eat too much?

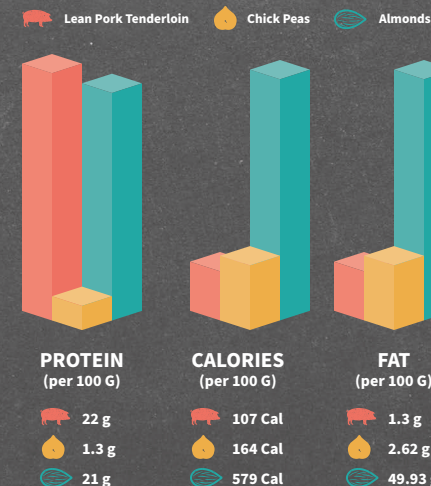
No. Based on a 100 gram serving, most Canadians consume only three meals a week of fresh red meat - either pork, beef, veal or lamb.

4 reasons to pick Ontario Pork

- 1) Ontario pork is **raised by Ontario farmers** in your local communities.
- 2) Ontario pork has **no added hormones** – like all Canadian pork.
- 3) Ontario pork is a **healthy choice**. It's an excellent source of protein, vitamins and zinc.
- 4) Ontario pork is natural with **no artificial ingredients** – like all minimally processed Canadian pork.

Can you get just as much protein from plants?

You can – but it's different.



Animal and plant foods are better together

Healthy amounts of both animal and plant proteins improve diet quality and have complementary benefits when eaten together. Combining vegetables and whole grains with lean meats provides a **wide spectrum of essential nutrients** along with a satisfying eating experience—ideally shared with family and friends. These benefits aren't found in highly processed foods, vitamin pills or other nutrition supplements such as protein powder and protein bars. Whole foods make great nutritional sense!

Looking for some tasty inspiration?

Visit OntarioPork.on.ca/recipes for all of our delicious recipes.



About Ontario Pork

Ontario Pork represents the farmers who raise and market hogs in the province. The organization is engaged in many areas, including research, government representation, environmental issues, consumer education and food quality assurance.



@ontariopork
ontariopork.on.ca/faq