



NC STATE
EXTENSION

WHAT TO KNOW BEFORE BUYING A PIG

Transport: It is a general recommendation that pigs have enough room to lie down and stand up comfortably in the truck or trailer they are being hauled. On short trips they will likely stand. Also, trucks and trailers should be covered as pigs can jump out of an uncovered trailer. Pigs of market weight, should be given between 4.5 and 4.8 square feet of transport space per pig.



Animal Care: Pigs should have several hours of rest after transport before harvesting. Regardless of how soon you intend to harvest, some basic husbandry will be required.

This includes: Unlimited access to fresh, clean water. If you intend to feed them for any period of time realize pigs of market size will consume around 8 pounds of feed per day. Pigs need shelter. Market size pigs require at least 8 square feet of pen space per pig. The shelter also needs to provide shade from the sun. Pens and fencing should be sturdy and secure. Electric fence is unlikely to contain these pigs as they have not been accustomed to it.



It is unlikely that any butchers or processors will be able to harvest your pigs for you given the current conditions. Therefore, you may need to process the pig yourself.

Euthanasia: Humane euthanasia includes minimal distress to the animal, rapid loss of consciousness and a quick death. There are multiple humane methods for use with market size pigs, however, gunshot and captive bolt are common and recommended. Refer to On Farm Euthanasia recommendations from the National Pork Board for more information <https://www.aasv.org/documents/2016EuthRec-EN.pdf>

Home Processing Resources: Several videos and resources are available as guides for processing:
At-Home Processing video <https://youtu.be/ojctijm2Tgo>
At Home Hog Slaughter, - <https://extension.sdstate.edu/home-hog-slaughter>
Pork Carcass Fabrication: Primal & Retail Cuts - <https://extension.sdstate.edu/pork-carcass-fabrication-primal-and-retail-cuts>
Pork Carcass Fabrication: Packaging and Meat Safety - <https://extension.sdstate.edu/pork-carcass-fabrication-packaging-and-meat-safety>

Food Safety and Storage: Raw pork should be handled carefully to prevent illness. Cool below 41° F and/or freeze pork as quickly as possible. https://foodsafety.ces.ncsu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Bulk-Pork-Sales_COVID-19_Flyer.pdf?fwd=no

A large amount of freezer space is required to store a fully processed pig. A pig with live weight of 270 pounds should produce about 120-140 pounds of fresh meat. A common 2.25 cubic foot freezer can hold about 50 pounds of meat. <https://store.extension.iastate.edu/product/13056>

Other Resources: Feral pigs are found in every county in North Carolina and are problematic. https://www.aphis.usda.gov/publications/wildlife_damage/content/printable_version/feral%20pigs.pdf
To report a feral swine sighting please contact the NC Feral Swine Task Force at [866.318.2401](tel:866.318.2401)