

Pasture Pork — Basics of Feeding

What do I feed?

- A grain-based diet with a good protein source is important; pasture alone is not enough.
- Each age animal has different dietary needs, so more than one type of feed is needed.
- Feed in pellet form is easier for the pig to eat and digest, but may cost more.
- You can make your own feed or buy feeds, but get help to design diets when needed.
- Mature adult animals can use some high-quality forages, but still need grain.



How do I feed?

- Feed mixed with soil wastes money. Do not feed on the bare ground.
- Have enough feeder space to reduce fighting and to keep all animals in good body condition.
- Use bulk feeders (pictured above, right) from weaning to market so animals have feed available at all times.
- Do not feed or house small pigs with large pigs. They have different dietary needs. Large pigs will also push the small ones away from the feed.
- Use sturdy feeders that the animals cannot break.
- Keep the feeders clean. This is important for animal health.

Other important items:

- Fresh, clean water at a reasonable temperature — one that humans could withstand — should be available at all times; thirsty hogs do not eat or grow well.

- Deworm the animals as needed. Left untreated, internal parasites such as worms will slow the rate of growth in animals and cause them health problems.
- Make sure the animals are fat enough; keep track of body condition.
- Store feed properly to avoid mold and to keep out rodents that can cause health problems.

For more information on feeding or checking body condition in hogs, contact your county Cooperative Extension Center

www.ces.ncsu.edu/local-county-center/

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Revised January, 2015



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