

# ASF Risk Mitigation: Knowledge Transfer for Small-Scale Pig Producers



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Saskatchewan  
Ministry of  
Agriculture



UNIVERSITY OF  
SASKATCHEWAN



PRAIRIE  
SWINE  
CENTRE



# Developing Effective Communication/KT Strategies for Small-Scale Pig Producers

- Limit the potential impact African Swine Fever (ASF) would have in the Canadian pork industry.
- Commercial and small-scale Canadian producers.
- Biosecurity.
- Reduces disease risk – ASF, FMD, others.
- Effective communication methods.



# Survey

- 565 respondents from all regions in Canada.
- Both official languages.
- Question examples:
  - If housed outside, do you provide physical barriers such as fences and gates to prevent your pigs from coming into contact with wildlife?
  - Do you think there are any risks associated with feeding your pig(s) food waste from your kitchen or food waste from a grocery stores, bakeries, restaurant/pub/café?
  - How do you reduce the risk of disease in your pigs? (Select all that apply).

# Survey Results

## Small-scale Pig Producer Survey



Survey Report

June 2021



Prairie Swine Centre gratefully acknowledges the assistance of the following organizations in the creation and implementation of this survey:

Canadian Pork Council, BC Pork, Alberta Pork, Sask Pork, Manitoba Pork, Ontario Pork, Les Éleveurs de porcs du Québec, Centre de développement du porc du Québec (CDPQ), BC Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, Manitoba Agriculture & Resource Development, Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA), Ministère de l'Agriculture, des Pêcheries et de l'Alimentation du Québec (MAPAQ), Porc NB Pork, Pork Nova Scotia, PEI Hog Commodity Marketing Board, Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA), Canadian Animal Health Surveillance System (CAHSS), University of Guelph, Canadian Hub for Applied and Social Research (CHASR) - University of Saskatchewan.

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The Canadian Hub for Applied and Social Research (CHASR) at the University of Saskatchewan performed the data analysis and reporting for this project.





# Results

- Many producers are quite knowledgeable regarding biosecurity, but:
  - 3.9% have no physical barriers to prevent direct contact of wildlife with their pigs.
  - 56.3% feed their pigs table scraps or food waste from their kitchen.
  - 3.7% feed meat or meat products to their pigs.
  - 47.9% do not perceive any risks associated with feeding food waste from their kitchen or grocery stores, bakeries, restaurants, etc.
  - >25% have not heard of ASF or FMD; almost half have not heard of PRRS.



# Results

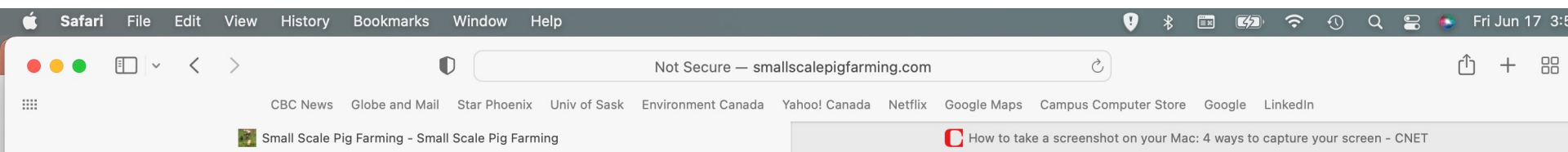
- Producers appear to prefer to get information about caring their pigs from:
  - A person (other pig producers or their veterinarian).
  - Social media and pig websites.
  - Provincial Pork Boards, CPC.
- Least interest in receiving information from Government of Canada and swine surveillance networks.



# Results

- What concerns producers most about their pigs getting a serious disease is the welfare of their pigs (94%).
- Producers are receptive to receiving information about how to keep their pigs healthy and reduce the risk of diseases.
- Producers are interested in receiving messaging that is specific to small-scale producers, that is respectful to them, and developed in consultation with them.

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Starting Out

Pig Basics

Pig Health

Marketing Your Pigs

Blog

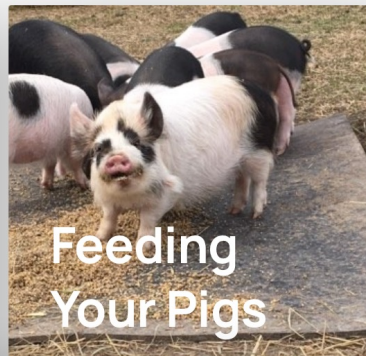
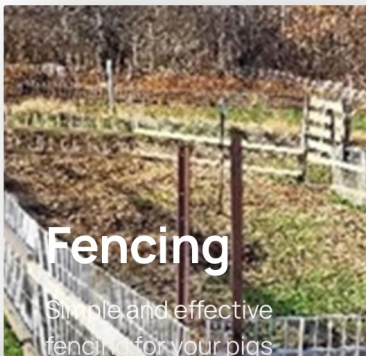
Publications



## Raising pigs outside?

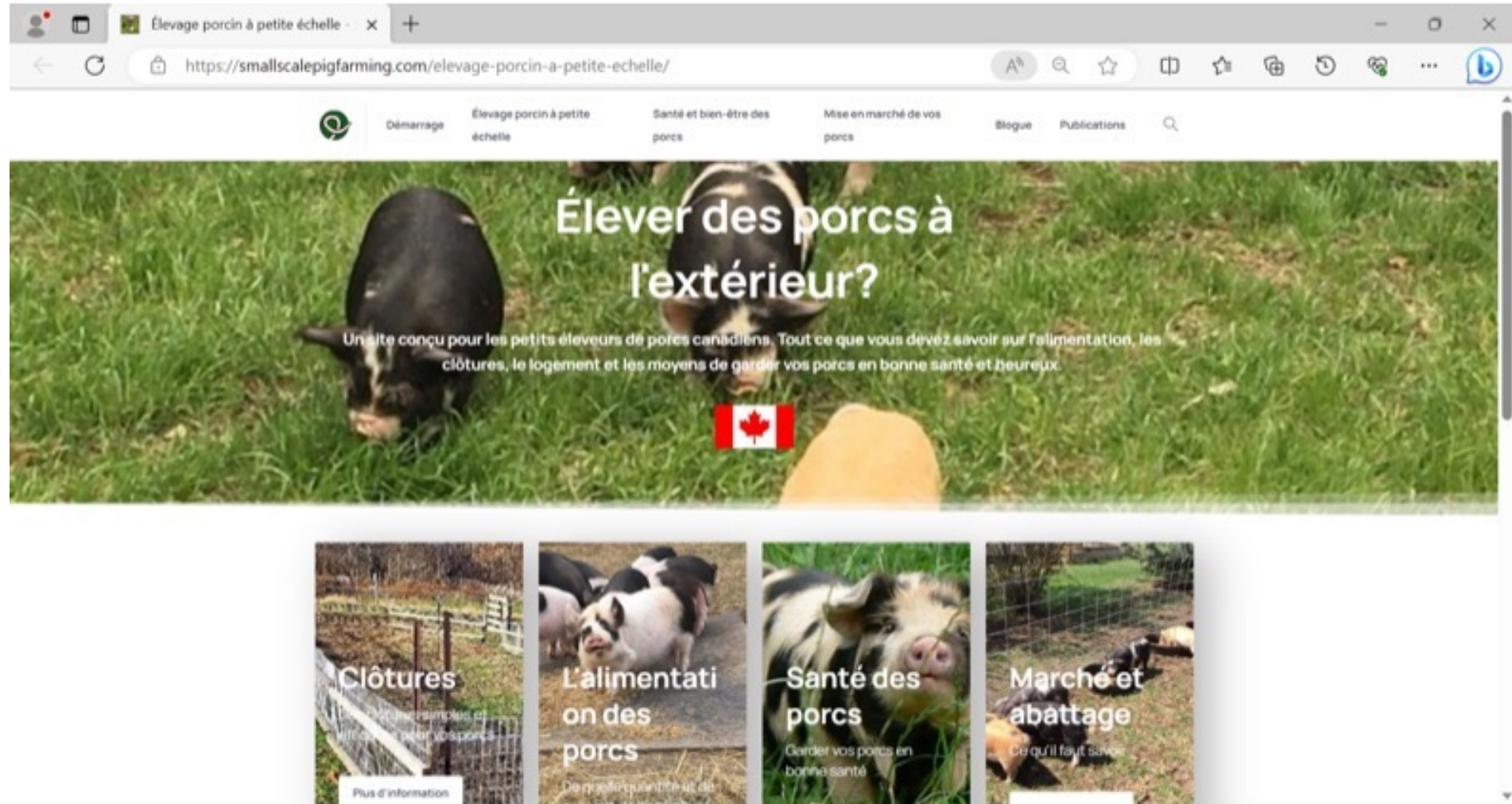
Everything you need to know about feeding, fencing, housing and keeping your pigs healthy and happy

≡ Pig Basics





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Élevage porcin à petite échelle - x +

https://smallscalepigfarming.com/elevage-porcin-a-petite-echelle/

Démarrage   Élevage porcin à petite échelle   Santé et bien-être des porcs   Mise en marché de vos porcs   Blogue   Publications

## Élever des porcs à l'extérieur?

Un site conçu pour les petits éleveurs de porcs canadiens. Tout ce que vous devez savoir sur l'alimentation, les clôtures, le logement et les moyens de garder vos porcs en bonne santé et heureux.



Clôtures  
Des conseils simples et pratiques pour vos porcs.  
Plus d'information

L'alimentation des porcs  
De quoi leur offrir le meilleur de la vie.

Santé des porcs  
Garder vos porcs en bonne santé.

Marché et abattage  
Ce qu'il faut savoir.

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Interested in raising pigs? Check out these videos

Check it Now



Starting Out

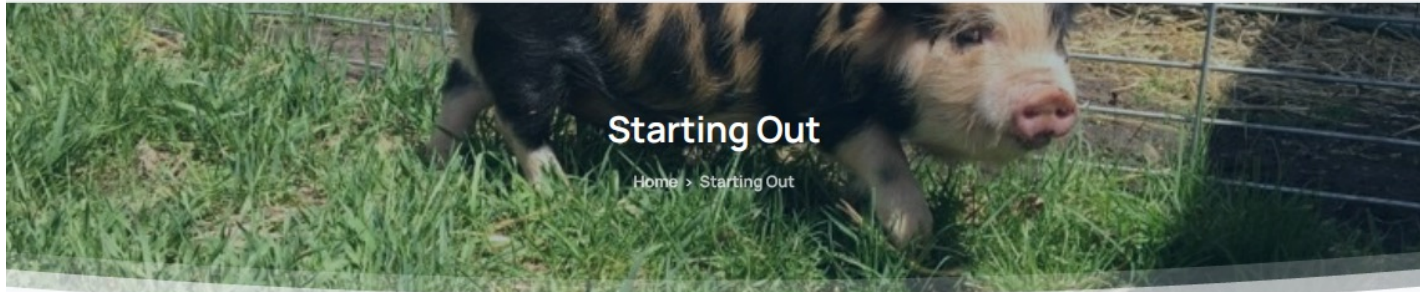
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## Where do I start?

- Start Small. Many producers recommend starting with two to four weaner/feeder pigs (20-25 kg) in the spring and raise them until slaughter/market weight (100-130 kg). Do this for a couple of years before considering increasing the total number of weaner/feeder pigs or adding breeding animals to your farm. That way, the size of your pig herd will not outpace your experience and your capacity to care for, or market, them.
- Breed Selection. There are a number of different breeds that could be a good fit for your operation, including Kunekune, Tamworth, Berkshire, Hereford, Hampshire and White pigs (Landrace, Yorkshire). The type of pig that best fits your operation will depend on your goals. Each breed will have distinctive advantages and shortfalls depending on nutrition (pasture/grain), housing environment (outdoor/indoor), management (temperament and hardness), and finishing time.
- Buy pigs from trusted sources. This can be from local groups, online sources, or breeders. Try and avoid auction marts, as pigs from multiple sources may be mixed there. Try to purchase from a single source, and ideally one that has been tested and is free from or vaccinated for common diseases. Purchasing cheap pigs will generally cost you more in the long run due to costs associated with disease, mortality, and slow growth.
- There are legal requirements for registering your farm with the provincial government and for reporting movements of pigs. [Requirements – Small Scale Pig Farming](#).
- Healthy Pigs. Regardless of the number, type or breed of pig you purchase, the most important aspect is to purchase from a healthy herd. This can alleviate a lot of potential problems. Try to quarantine your pigs when they arrive on your farm is an important part in maintaining the health and safety of your pigs.
- Veterinarians should be an important part of your operation. However, in some regions it can be difficult to find one with pig experience. Try to find a veterinarian prior to purchasing pigs to ensure they can help you when required.
- Book Slaughter Space in Advance. Ensure you can market your pigs when they get to market weight. Many abattoirs require booking a spot two or more months in advance.



## How many pigs should you start with?

Start small with two to four weaner pigs, typically purchased in the spring and raised until market weight (late fall). This will give you an opportunity to understand the requirements and commitment required in raising pigs. Once you have become comfortable raising weaner pigs for a couple of seasons, you can build your

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## FENCING YOUR PIGS FACT SHEET



Fencing is an essential component in raising pigs. A sturdy and well planned out fence not only keeps your pigs in, but also reduces risks associated with disease transmission from wildlife and losses associated with predation. Escaped pigs result in lost revenue, and can lead to unhappy neighbors and increased welfare risks.

### Where Do I Start?

There are many different fencing options for raising pigs outdoors. The type of fencing you choose will depend on several factors, which includes cost, sturdiness, longevity and ease of set-up/repair.

It is important to consider the size of your pigs when developing the fencing plan for your farm. Pigs can go over, through or under a fence when not designed properly, and their strong snouts can lift fences, including posts, if not secure.

### HOT TIP

Pigs can be escape artists and can be difficult to catch once they are out. Build a strong and secure fence before ever bringing pigs home.

### Fencing Types

Page wire



Hog panels



Pipe panel



Solid wood or metal



High tensile wire



Electric netting



**DO NOT** use barbed wire - Barbs can harm and compromise the welfare of the pigs

### Perimeter Fencing

The most effective perimeter fences will combine multiple types of fencing in layers. This reduces the possibility of pigs escaping and unwanted contact with wildlife. An example of this is an external page wire fence with an electric fence located inside of that. Electric wires should be located low (at pig height) and high to prevent pigs from routing under or jumping over the fence.



### Electric Fencing

Ideally suited for use inside existing perimeter fencing or paddock. Not recommended as the only type of perimeter fencing. Training of your pigs is required for electric fencing to be effective. Ensuring proper installation and ongoing testing and maintenance is crucial to successfully using electric fencing.

### FENCING CONSIDERATIONS

- Fences (page wire) should be at least 4 feet in height above ground and buried at least 1 foot below ground.
- Posts should be 3 to 5 inches in diameter and at least 5 feet in height. Space posts at most 15 to 18 feet apart.
- Wires need to be spaced closer (6 inch) together near the ground and wider (12 inch) on the top part of the fence.
- Monitor and maintain fences, specifically looking for weak spots when using page wire, wooden, or mesh fences.
- Ensure paddocks have good gate access — this facilitates handling and moving pigs.
- Use lag bolts instead of screws and nails for attaching boards



More information and resources about fencing your pigs can be found at  
[www.smallscalepigfarming.com](http://www.smallscalepigfarming.com)

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## FEEDING YOUR PIGS FACT SHEET



Pigs can be raised on a variety of feeds, as long as the nutritional requirements for various stages of production are met. Poorly balanced diets result in pigs that get sick more easily, grow slowly, and produce a poorer quality carcass.

Pigs are omnivores (eat food from plant and animal origin) and require energy (fats, carbohydrates), protein (amino acids), vitamins and minerals, and clean water.

How much a pig eats is dependent on a number of factors such as their breed, age, sex, stage of growth, condition, housing, season and type of ingredients used. Ideally, pregnant sows and boars are fed once or twice a day, while growing pigs and lactating sows would have access to feed 24 hours a day. This will ensure the greatest welfare and growth of your pigs.

The easiest and most convenient way to feed your pigs is to purchase complete feed. This will ensure your pigs will get the nutrition they require that will benefit them the most. Other options include blending your own feed on farm, or a combination of purchased and farm-made feeds.

### PASTURE PRODUCTION

- Pigs require additional feed when raised on pasture. Pasture does not provide enough or adequate nutrients for pigs.
- Rotational grazing improves pasture and pig performance
- Pigs on pasture are more susceptible to parasite infection. Disease and parasite management is essential.

### DON'T FORGET THE WATER

- A pig's water intake is 2–3 times higher than feed intake, therefore providing clean fresh water at all times is essential.
- Pigs require continuous access to water (24/7) to ensure they stay healthy and grow to their best potential.
- Water can be provided using a trough, tub, nipple drinker, or water bowl. The system that will work best for you will depend on water source, number of pigs, pasture or pen layout and season.
- Regardless of the water system you use, ensure you clean it on a regular basis to avoid contamination from manure.



### CONSEQUENCES OF POOR NUTRITION

- Pigs get sick more easily. Deficiencies, excesses, and imbalances in the diet can cause health and/or production issues.
- Pigs tend to grow more slowly.
- Pigs convert feed inefficiently.
- Pigs produce a poorer quality carcass (e.g., too fat, low muscle mass).

## FEED AND WATER CONSIDERATIONS



DO

- ✓ **Provide a balanced diet to meet pigs' nutritional needs at each stage of production.** Choosing the appropriate feed for the stage of growth has a direct effect on how long it takes to get a pig to market weight, how much it costs, and the meat quality.
- ✓ **Provide constant access to fresh, clean water.** Pigs can drink up to 20 L a day. Make sure water doesn't freeze in winter.
- ✓ **Provide enough feeder space** to prevent competition, and ensure feeders are easily accessible to all pigs.
- ✓ **Feed troughs should be rodent- and pest-proof.** Clean up feed spills. Spills will attract pests and wild animals.
- ✓ **Purchase feed and feed ingredients from reputable sources.** Avoid purchasing feed from international or unknown sources.



DON'T

- X **Don't feed meat or meat by-products to pigs; this is prohibited in Canada.** Meat scraps or dinner table scraps could be contaminated with diseases that could make your pigs sick.
- X **Avoid feeding recycled food products (RFPs) including kitchen waste or food scraps to pigs** as they may be contaminated with or contain small amounts of meat products. If you are feeding RFPs, be sure to check the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) guidelines.
- X **Don't feed hay or straw to pigs** that contain visible contaminants, such as dead rodents, bird nests, or animal feces.
- X **Avoid using surface water as a water source.** Not only will it contaminate the water body but also it could compromise the health and well-being of your pigs.

More information and resources about feeding your pigs can be found at [www.SmallScalePigFarming.com](http://www.SmallScalePigFarming.com).

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## Food Safety



## Housing Pigs Outside



## Treatments and Vaccinations



# Acknowledgements

- Canadian Pork Council
- BC Pork
- Alberta Pork
- Sask Pork
- Manitoba Pork
- Ontario Pork
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- Centre de développement du porc du Québec (CDPQ)
- BC Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries
- Manitoba Agriculture & Resource Development
- Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA)
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