

PIGS ON THE FARM



Think about the following phrases: “pig’s sty;” “don’t be a pig;” “dirty as a pig;” “fat as a pig.” These are just some of the many ways that pigs have been misrepresented.

Hog production in the United States has changed dramatically over the years. Farmers used to feed their pigs slop, a mixture of leftovers from the farmhouse. Pigs were known for being dirty animals because they wallowed in the mud. At one time, pigs were also thought to be more marketable if they weighed more.

Today, farmers feed their animals a balanced mixture of corn, soybeans, vitamins, and minerals. They also have a constant supply of water available to them. This makes today’s leaner pigs more marketable to the more health conscious consumer. Most farmers keep their animals in a building that is temperature controlled so that the pigs don’t get too cold or too hot (pigs can’t sweat).

These healthy animals provide us with lean, delicious meat as well as by-products. These by-products are then turned into things we use daily like glue, crayons, floor wax, buttons, as well as burn dressings and insulin.

The lessons and materials in this kit will help students understand what pigs are, what farmers do to take care of pigs, and how people benefit from pigs. Students will also learn that while we go to the store to purchase our food, it begins with the plants or animals raised on farms. Pigs provide us with a variety of food and non-food products. From the farm, products are transported, processed, marketed, and distributed. This chain of events involves a multitude of agricultural careers. Through this kit, students will discover that they all depend on agriculture each day of their lives.

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