

DID YOU KNOW?

Pigs "have the cognitive ability to be quite sophisticated. Even more so than dogs and certainly [more so than] three-year-olds," says Dr. Donald Broom, Cambridge University professor and former scientific advisor to the Council of Europe. One study found that they can even learn to play simple video games.

Pigs naturally live and spend their time in groups. They express friendships with each other through vocalizations and body language. Like human children, piglets are particularly fond of play and chase one another, play-fight, tumble down hills, and generally engage in a wide variety of enjoyable activities. Pigs are very active, traveling up to 30 miles a day at a quick pace. Noted ethologist, Dr. Alex Stolba, observed that pigs living in a natural environment also spend much of their day grazing and rooting. Pigs raised on factory farms are denied all of these behaviors.



Pigs are widely considered the fifth smartest animal on the planet.

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Pigs

The vast majority of mother pigs (sows), spend most of their lives in individual "gestation" crates that are approximately seven-feet-long and two-feet-wide — too small for them to even turn around. Just before giving birth, they are moved to "farrowing" crates, which are again not large enough for them to turn around or build nests for their young.^[1]



Mother pigs spend most of their lives in crates so small that they cannot even turn around. Ontario sow operation.

The deprived environment produces neurotic coping behaviors such as repetitive bar biting, sham chewing (chewing nothing), and obsessively pressing on water bottles.^[2,3]

Piglets are taken from their mothers when they are as young as 10 days old and packed into pens until they are separated to be raised for breeding or meat. They too are overcrowded and prone to stress-related behaviors, such as cannibalism and tail-biting.





Pigs raised for meat are crowded into filthy ammonia-laden sheds and denied fresh air. Ontario pig barn.

Rather than give the animals more space and a better environment to prevent these problems, factory farmers chop off the piglets' tails and use pliers to break off the ends of their teeth.^[4] Factory farmers also rip out the males' testicles to prevent them from producing sexual pheromones. All of these excruciating mutilations are done without any painkillers.^[5]

Sick pigs who are seen as unproductive 'production units' are left to suffer or killed. Common killing methods include: "thumping" (slamming animals' heads against the floor until they die), drowning them with a hose, and standing on their necks.^[6, 7, 8]



Sick pigs are denied medical treatment and left to suffer agonizing deaths. Pig left to die in Ontario pig barn.

Transportation

Canadian transport regulations allow pigs to be transported without food, water or a rest for 36 hours. Haulers are not required to have any animal handling or animal welfare training. Violations are frequent but go unaddressed and unpunished. Numerous investigations into Canada's transport system have documented widespread abuses^[9, 10, 11] including:

- Pigs too sick or injured to even stand being painfully shocked with electric prods, kicked, and beaten.
- Frightened animals transported hundreds to thousands of kilometres in all weather extremes without any weather protection.
- Sick and injured animals left to suffer without proper veterinary care in plain view of government inspectors.
- Animals arriving at slaughterhouses so sick, diseased or injured that they are declared unfit for human consumption.



Manitoba pigs who died after being left on board trailer for days in sweltering heat in Texas.

Slaughter

Almost 22 million pigs are killed in federally and provincially approved slaughterhouses in Canada each year.^[12] Cruelty at slaughterhouses is commonplace. An April 10, 2001 story in the *Washington Post* reports that, "Hogs...are dunked in tanks of hot water after they are stunned to soften the hides for skinning. As a result, a botched slaughter condemns some hogs to being scalded and drowned. Secret videotape from an Iowa pork plant shows hogs squealing and kicking as they are being lowered into the water."

According to slaughter plant worker, Tommy Vlak, "After they left me, the hogs would go up a hundred-foot ramp to a tank where they're dunked in 140° water...Water any hotter than that would take the meat right off their bones...There's no way these animals can bleed out in the few minutes it takes to get up the ramp. By the time they hit the scalding tank, they're still fully conscious and squealing. Happens all the time."^[13]



Pigs may not be given sufficient time to bleed out before being plunged into the scald tank.