

## Feeding Your Market Hog: a Youth Guide

Tom Platt, Extension Educator

Feeding your market hogs to reach proper weight and finish by show time is a challenge you and your family will enjoy. Following the simple guidelines in this fact sheet will help you successfully complete your project.

Selection is important. Select growthy, free moving pigs that are approximately eight weeks old. Your feeder pigs' weight at selection should be related to the number of days you plan to feed them before the show. A healthy, good quality pig gains about 1.72 pounds per day from 44 to 270 pounds. They gain a little faster than this in the summer, and a little slower in the winter. Some finish at 240 pounds, and some finish at 280 pounds. The table below will help you select the appropriate weight feeder pigs to meet your show target date, assuming they will finish at 270 pounds.

Purchase weight, lbs	Approximate days to 270 pounds at 1.72 pounds daily gain
44	131
54	126
64	120
74	114

Your pig should be treated for lice and mange and de-wormed 10 to 30 days after weaning. It should be vaccinated for erysipelas as well.

Your baby pigs are more sensitive to cold weather than older pigs. They should have a dry, draft-free shelter that is well bedded with straw. The ideal temperature for young pigs is 70-75 degrees, so if they are kept outdoors they need plenty of protection.

Pigs can be self-fed in free choice feeders or they can be hand-fed twice a day. Hand feeding offers the advantage of accurate feed monitoring. Pigs should be fed enough feed so they just clean up their feed trough before their next feeding. Self feeding is more convenient and the pigs can eat whenever they are hungry. Pigs should always have fresh feed and free access to clean water. Growing rations have more protein, calcium, and phosphorous than finishing rations to allow the young pig to development bone and muscle. Your pigs will consume about 3.3 pounds of feed per pound of gain throughout the feeding period.

Most youngsters feed their pigs either a complete mixed ration that contains all the grain, vitamins, minerals, and protein supplement their pigs require, or they feed ground or rolled grain with which they mix a commercial supplement that contains vitamins, minerals, and protein. It is important that the mixing instructions on the supplement's label be followed carefully. Ration guidelines, growth rates, and feed intake for growing and finishing pigs are estimated below.

<b>Estimated Feed and Gain, Growing and Finishing Pigs</b>				
	<b>Pig Weight, lb.</b>	<b>Daily Feed, lb.</b>	<b>Daily Gain, lb.</b>	<b>Days</b>
Growing Pigs	44-110	4.2	1.54	42
Finishing Pigs	110-242	5.3	1.8	73
	242-270	7.9	1.7	16

Daily gain, 44-270 pounds: 1.72 pounds per day

Total feed required, 44-270 pounds: 689 pounds at 3 pounds feed per pound of gain

Good luck with your hog project!