



## Economic considerations

A large enough area must be available for erecting the necessary pig and other buildings. It is also important to have land available where manure can be stacked in windrows to dry.

Before venturing into pig farming you should accurately determine the money needed to buy and erect fixed and movable assets.

**Income**

**Production cost**

**Profit**





*Land*

*Shed*

*Housing for pigs*

*Housing for farmer and workers*

*Water facilities*

*Self-feeders*

*Feed scale*

*Gate and fence*

*Truck*

*Boars*

*Gilts*

## *Feed*

### *Salaries for workers*



### *Profit and loss account of a pig farmer*

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## **Essential fixed assets**

- Land
- Room or shed where feed can be mixed and stored. Equipment can be stored in the same room
- Housing for the farmer and his workers, if appropriate
- Pig housing as set out in chapter on housing
- Water facilities, including pump, pipes, taps, drinking nipples, reservoir and boreholes (if necessary)
- Self-feeders
- Feed scale
- Security fence and entrance gate

- Truck
- Roads



### **Important movable assets**

- Truck for transporting pigs and feed
- Ten or 20 pregnant gilts between the ages of 10 and 12 months
- Two or three young boars between the ages of eight and 12 months
- Additional equipment.

### **Initial feed requirements**

It is important to note that pigs are only sold 11 months after the first pigs were introduced onto the farm. You must therefore have enough money to

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buy the necessary feed for the pigs until an income can be generated from selling them.

Young sows, bought when six weeks pregnant (8 to 12 months old), should produce two litters of 10 piglets each during their first 11 months on the farm. To feed the sow and the pigs she produces will require about 4,5 tons of feed for the 11 months until the first pigs are sold. Boars eat about 2 kg of feed per day and therefore 660 kg of feed is required to feed a boar during the first 11 months.

## **Production cost**

### ***Feed cost***

Feed is always the biggest cost factor on a pig farm and amounts to between 60 and 80 % of the total production cost. Everything possible must therefore be done to keep feed cost as low as possible.

It is important to:

- use well-balanced feed mixtures that are mixed for specific pig groups on the farm (for example creep feed for piglets and a growth mixture for growers)
- prevent feed wastage
- save on feed cost by mixing your own feed
- buy feed ingredients at the lowest possible price
- farm with good-quality pigs that have the ability to produce pig meat with a low fat content and can therefore utilise their feed efficiently.

A saving of as little as R10 on a ton of mixed feed will save R3 on the production cost of a 90-kg pig. The production cost can be further reduced by R30 if 10 % is saved on the quantity of feed fed to produce a 90-kg pig.

### ***Other costs***

These include:

- Labour
  - Transport
  - Fuel
  - Veterinary costs
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- Medication
- Washing detergents
- Slaughter fees
- Repairs and maintenance
- Replacement animals

### ***Feed requirements***

It is important to know how much feed is required for your pigs. Feed is the biggest cost factor on the farm (60 to 80 %) and therefore the most expensive cost item. The total quantity of feed that must be fed to the different pig groups must be known if a profit is to be made.

On a well-run pig farm with good-quality pigs kept under good farming conditions the following guidelines can indicate to the farmer whether the performance of his pigs is adequate.

#### **Sows**

- During the dry and pregnant period—2 kg/day for 285 days 570 kg
- During lactation—8 kg/day for 56 days 448 kg

#### **Boars**

2 kg/day for 365 days 730 kg

#### **Piglets**

About 80 g/day for 28 days (1,5\_7 kg for 0\_28 days of age) 2 kg

#### **Weaners**

About 800 g/day for 42 days (7\_25 kg for 28\_70 days of age) 34 kg

#### **Porkers**

About 1,6 kg/day for 40 days (25\_50 kg for 70\_110 days of age) 64 kg

## **Finisher pigs**

About 2,6 kg/day for 50 days (50\_90 g for 110\_160 days of age) 130 kg

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### ***Feed required per pig marketed in one year (kg)***

**Suppositions: Each sow weans 20 marketable pigs per year**

**Each boar serves 15 sows per year**

Sow (1 000 kg/20 piglets): 50

Boar (730 kg/20 piglets/15 sows/boar): 2,4

Piglet: 2

Weaner: 34

Porker: 64

Finisher: 130

**Total 280**

These figures are approximate estimates and can vary between 270 kg or less and above 300 kg. Feed costs are in excess of R1 000/t of feed or more than R1/kg. Every 1 kg of feed saved on a marketable pig therefore extends the profit margin for the farmer by R1. The importance of keeping the quantity of feed required to rear market pigs as low as possible cannot be overemphasised.

Cost structure changes on a daily basis. No attempt is therefore made to attach monetary values to the economic aspects discussed in this chapter. Readers interested in costs are advised to consult the South African Pork Producers' Organisation. (See the chapter on publications and further information.)

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# Publications and further information

Additional information and more detail on specific aspects of pig farming can be obtained from the publications and information centres listed below.

## Publications

*ILI Extensive Pig Housing*

ARC-Institute for Agricultural Engineering

Private Bag X519

Silverton

0127

Telephone: (012) 842 4000

*ILI Manual on Housing for Pigs*

ARC-Institute for Agricultural Engineering

Private Bag X519

Silverton

0127

Telephone: (012) 842 4000

*Pig Production in South Africa*

ARC-Institute for Animal Nutrition and Animal Products

Private Bag X2

Irene

1675

Telephone: (012) 672 9111

*The Pigman's Handbook*

Editor Gerry Brent, Farming Press Limited.

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## **Information**

South African Pork Producer's Organisation

PO Box 1508

Pretoria

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Telephone: (012) 322 6980

ARC-Animal Nutrition and Animal Products Institute

Private Bag X2

Irene

1675

Telephone: (012) 672 9111

ARC-Animal Improvement Institute

Private Bag X2

Irene

1675

Telephone: (012) 672 9111

ARC-Institute for Agricultural Engineering

Private Bag X519

Silverton

0127

Telephone: (012) 842 4000

Department of Agriculture

Private Bag X250

Pretoria

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Telephone: (012) 319 6000

Provincial Departments of Agriculture

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## Glossary

Anthelmintic drug remedy against worms

Anaemic animals with a shortage of blood

Baconer a pig ready for slaughter at 90 kg live weight

Capital items items with money value

Cannibalism pigs bite other pigs

Congenital inherited

Creep area area where baby piglets lie and eat away from the sow

Colostrum milk of a sow directly after she gives birth

Deficiency shortage

Diarrhoea watery manure

Environment temperature, wind, rain in a specific area

Farrow a sow giving birth

Finisher growing pig during the period before slaughter at 90 kg live weight

Dung manure

Gilt a young female pig selected for breeding

Hernia rupture

Nutritional value value of feed for production

Lactating sow a sow suckling a litter of piglets

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Gastrointestinal tract food channel

Placenta afterbirth fluids and membranes

Porker a pig ready for slaughter at 60 kg live weight

Postmortem after death

Scours watery manure

Sow a female pig that has already had piglets

Unpalatable feed that pigs do not like

Utilisation of feed use of feed by a pig to grow

Umbilical cord the cord that attaches a newborn piglet to its mother

Wean to remove piglets from mother's milk supply

Weaner a piglet that has been taken away from its mother

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