

You may have heard claims that hogs are responsible for contaminating rural wells or that hog farming is an unregulated industry. Close scrutiny by government authorities shows no substance to the claims.

Unregulated industry? Not true.

Suggestions that hog farming is unregulated in Manitoba are completely false. Manitoba hog farms, of all sizes, are required to follow numerous provincial and federal laws and regulations, as well as local by-laws and conditional use requirements.

Hog farmers are required to follow Manitoba's Environment Act (specifically the Livestock Manure and Mortalities Regulation), Water Rights Act, Planning Act, Animal Care Act and Farm Practices Protection Act. They must also follow the federal Animal Care Act and Fisheries Act and also municipal development plans and zoning by-laws. These are enforced by a variety of provincial and federal officials.

Rural well "contamination"? Far from it.

As farmers, our very existence is tied to a reliable source of quality water. Not only do we live, work, play and raise our families on our farms, but good water quality is also critical to the raising of all of our livestock.

Dr. Joel Kettner, Manitoba's Chief Medical Examiner, released the results of a comprehensive study in 2000 indicating that not a single water contamination incident he examined was related to intensive agricultural practices - not feed lots nor hog barns.

In the same year, Manitoba Conservation tested 1000 wells throughout the province. According to departmental officials, the most common sources of contamination were linked to improper well maintenance and malfunctioning local septic systems. None were from hog barns. This does not absolve Manitoba's livestock industry from using due diligence in protecting water.

Leaking manure storages? Simply put - No.

Allegations that engineered earthen manure storage structures are leaking into surface water throughout the province are false. The professional engineers who design and supervise the building of the structures take water quality concerns very seriously, as does the government. It is the law. Every year environment officers inspect all earthen manure storages built since 1994, and all concrete and steel storages built since 1998.



A last word

Hog farming is an important part of Manitoba's farming landscape and economy. If you would like more information, please check out these websites:

Manitoba Agriculture & Food	www.gov.mb.ca/agriculture
Manitoba Conservation	www.gov.mb.ca/natres
Manitoba Intergovernmental Affairs	www.gov.mb.ca/ia
Farm Practices Protection Board	www.gov.mb.ca/agriculture/programs/aaa25s03.html
Manitoba Pork Council	www.manitobapork.com

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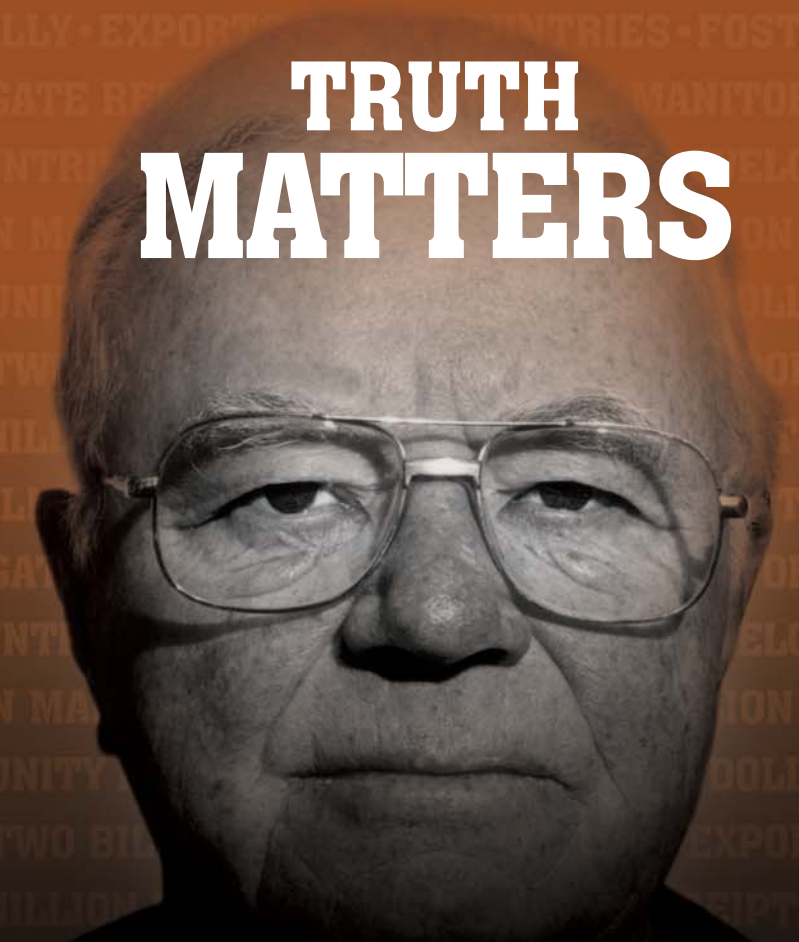


UNCOVER
the
FACTS



about
PORK

TRUTH
MATTERS



TO ALL
MANITOBANS

The truth about hog farming

Facts matter, not only to Wenzel Preun and his farm family, but to all Manitobans.

Hog farming is important to Manitoba's farm economy. In 2001, pigs represented more than \$850 million in farm gate receipts, almost 25% of the province's total. Add beef and dairy cattle to the mix, and more than 44% of the receipts are attributable to livestock.

Generating Employment Opportunities

More than 15,000 people work directly in the hog industry and generate more than \$2 billion annually for the provincial economy. Studies show that 80% of hog operator purchases and employee earnings are spent within a 50km radius of the farm's location. In addition, thousands more people work for companies offering supplies and support services to farmers, processors, distributors and sales organizations.

For many communities, this economic stimulus helps them grow and prosper - schools stay open and young people have an option to work in the community. And, it's not just rural Manitoba that benefits, the pork industry is also important to the economic well-being of cities like Brandon and Winnipeg.

A Leading Job Creator

Hog farming offers steady, well-paying jobs, with wages ranging from \$18,000 to \$27,000 for animal care technicians, to \$60,000 and more for some management positions. The industry offers excellent training opportunities for advancement. A Pork Production Technician apprenticeship program leading to journeyman status is available, as is advanced training leading to a Pork Production Manager Certificate.

Fostering Community Development

Hog farms are also important contributors to local taxes that support public services. Hog barns are taxed at 26% of their assessed value, the same as other farm buildings.

This means that a 1500-sow farrow-to-finish operation in a rural municipality could generate about \$24,000 annually for the rural municipality and about \$16,000 to the

local school division.

Other local benefits include indirect jobs - everything from veterinary services and feed mills through to a variety of retail operations. Civic leaders in a number of Manitoba communities, including La Broquerie, Killarney and Niverville, credit livestock industry growth as the major factor in their continuing prosperity.

Assuring Food Quality

As part of an ongoing commitment to producing high-quality food for consumers at home and around the world, Manitoba pig farmers participate in a national on-farm quality assurance program. Based on internationally recognized HACCP (Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points) principles, the program spells out management practices farmers follow to ensure food safety. The program is audited annually by specially trained veterinarians.



Taking Environmental Protection Seriously

By strict regulation, manure can only be applied to the land as a fertilizer. Because different crops have different nutrient needs, farmers depend on annual soil testing to customize a manure management plan that matches crop requirements. Regulations specifically prohibit applying more nitrogen than the crop can use in that crop year. In fact, livestock producers raising more than 400* animal units are required by law to register manure management plans with the province to prove they are handling the manure safely and responsibly. Manitoba Conservation randomly audits these plans annually.

Manure storages are designed by professional engineers for each site. Manitoba Conservation environment officers inspect the storages before permits are granted and put into use. Regulations under the Environment Act define all aspects of manure handling, transportation and application, composting and mortality management.

Properly managed, liquid hog manure is an excellent plant nutrient source of nitrogen, phosphorous, potassium and micro-nutrients. It also improves soil structure and quality.

**It is anticipated that this number will be reduced to 300 animal units by the provincial government in the near future.*

Odour Abatement

There is no quick fix for eliminating hog barn odours. But farmers can keep them under control. Manure storage covers - either straw covers or polyvinyl films - have proven effective. Planting shelterbelts or keeping existing trees in place can also help direct odour away from residential areas. Injecting manure into the soil rather than spreading it on the soil surface significantly reduces the odour and maximizes the crop's ability to use the nutrients in the manure. Independent research into new odour abatement practices and technologies is ongoing.

We show our commitment to being good neighbours by appropriate siting of barns and manure storages. If any activities fall outside normal farming practices, as defined by the farm practices guidelines, the Farm Practices Protection Board can address them. Nuisance-type situations can also be dealt with through Manitoba Pork Council's Peer Advisors Program.

