



# PIGS

Pigs are among the most intelligent animals on the Earth. They continue to suffer at the hands of humans, with intensive farming taking away all their mental and physical freedoms. To share time with a pig having a happy life on an organic holistically run farm is to appreciate just what special creatures they are. The desire for cheap Bacon and Sausages have a lot to answer for.



## History of Pigs

Pigs are derived from wild boars, in that they were bred by the ancestors of the European First Farmer. They spread up into Northern Europe from Anatolia (modern Turkey) back in the Neolithic times. Northern Europe was much colder than the old climate they were used to.

Pigs have been kept as an alternative to composting because the technology of effective sterilising composting was not known. Traditional pig farms in China used to have pig toilets as a system for waste recycling. See the picture (right).

Pigs will eat anything! It is because pigs will eat anything that they have been useful in the past. They grow quickly and can be kept in a small area. This ability to eat anything and everything has led to big problems in the past. Traditionally, places like pubs would give their kitchen waste to the local pig-keepers.



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In 2001, there was an outbreak of Foot and Mouth disease in the UK. Fortunately, thanks to prompt controls put in place, it did not reach Ireland. This is a deadly disease for cloven hoofed animals, which led to many thousands of sheep and cattle being destroyed, devastating the farming community in the UK. The source was identified as a pig farm that was feeding food waste. It is thought that within this waste were scraps of meat carrying the virus, imported from South Africa. As a result of the 2001 outbreak rules have changed it is now illegal to feed food waste to pigs.

**[Click here to read more on the Foot and Mouth Outbreak](#)**

### Clearing Land

Pigs can be used to clear land. If they are kept in a small area, they will eat most weeds, though docks are hard to remove... You can keep them in a small area using an electric fence. You can then move the fence once the area is completely clear and the pigs will clear that area next. If you leave them in a large area, they will leave the less palatable plants, such as thistles.

### Finding truffles

Pigs have also been used to find the underground fungus Truffle. These are very valuable and can bring in a lot of money for a farmer. It is now possible to get trees, pre-innoculated with the fungus, this makes finding the right tree a lot easier.



### Companion Pigs

Pigs may also be kept as pets. It is more sensible to choose a small variety for this, or alternatively a small vegetarian animal, that would be less messy and aggressive and would use less resources. Pocket pigs are a slightly less damaging alternative for people who like to have dogs in a handbag, but are not recommended as pets.

### Related Videos & Websites

- ⇒ [Facts About Pigs](#) ⇐
- ⇒ [Why Pigs are Useful in Medical Research](#) ⇐
- ⇒ [Organic Pig Farmer](#) ⇐
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