



BILLINGS FARM & MUSEUM

BABY FARM ANIMAL CELEBRATION: PUZZLED ABOUT PIGLETS?



At birth, piglets weigh only about 2.5 pounds. Piglets can double their weight in one week! A sow (mature female pig) will have on average 10 piglets per litter and can have two litters a year. Her gestation period is 3 months, 3 weeks, and 3 days. After three to five weeks the piglets are weaned and no longer drink their mother's milk. At this time, piglets are called shoats. Pigs are considered full grown at six months and can weigh between 300 and 700 pounds!

Did you know that pigs have poor eyesight? They make up for it with a great sense of smell. Pigs use their snout to smell food and root in the ground.

Rooting is when pigs use their snouts to push things around, mostly the ground. Rooting is a way of searching for things to eat like roots! It is a natural behavior that helps the pigs find the food and nutrients they need to stay healthy.

Pigs are omnivores meaning they eat plants and animals and even insects. They can eat most kitchen scraps like vegetables and fruits. They'll eat grains and bread and milk or whey. When pigs are rooting, they may be eating plant roots and insects they find.



PIG FACTS



- Pigs like to lie in mud because they have very few sweat glands. The mud keeps them nice and cool.
- Pigs aren't just squealing; they're **talking** to each other.
- Pigs are highly intellectual and social animals. They enjoy sleeping **nose to nose**.
- Pigs' genetic makeup is very similar to humans.
- There's even a breed of pig that **swims in the ocean!**
- Newborn piglets can recognize their mother's voice and learn how to respond.
- A pig's sense of smell is **2,000 times** more sensitive than humans.

TERMINOLOGY

Piglet = a baby pig.

Sow = a female pig.

Boar = a male pig.

Shoat = a piglet that has been weaned.

Rooting = the act of nudging the ground in search of food.

Omnivore = eating both plants and animals.

