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## PIGS 'N MUD...

Hi from Fork it Farm!

It's full speed ahead at Fork it Farm with construction started on the Meat Shed, we expected it to be completed in 4-6 weeks. Once completed the facility will need to be approved by Council and DPIPW before we commence butchering and curing our own forkin' tasty pork.

From April 14 we are excited to join the fabulous Farm Gate Market in Hobart. Come meet us (if you haven't already) and come grab some forkin' tasty pork every 2nd and 4th Sunday of the month.

We hope you enjoy this edition of Pigs 'n Mud.





## What are you really buying?

We all decide what meat we buy based on a few key factors; taste, convenience, cost, health, animal welfare, the environment, or a combination of these factors.

It doesn't seem that long ago that buying meat was as simple as choosing between chicken, lamb, pork or beef. Unfortunately, like the rest of the grocery shopping, it seems that the food labels on meat products have become a lot more complicated.

Even with the best intentions, it can be hard to know how the animals we eat are raised. Australian legislation doesn't require producers to disclose fully their farming methods, leaving shoppers in the dark about the animal welfare implications of certain foods or, worse, misled by an array of labels, claims or certifications that don't really guarantee animals have been reared in higher welfare systems.

### Choosing higher welfare pork...

It's estimated that 97% of the 4.8 million pigs grown annually in Australia are raised indoors with no outdoor access. These farms are variously referred to as intensive, conventional or factory farms. Only 3% of pigs are farmed outdoors.

Stocking densities are one welfare concern driving consumers to pay a premium for free-range pork.

For pigs raised indoors, the Model Code of Practice for the Welfare of Animals: Pigs requires less than 1m<sup>2</sup> per 120kg pig. For outdoor pigs, the maximum stocking limits for sows and boars (used mainly for breeding) are








"recommended" in the code, but there are no guidelines around the maximum number of grower pigs (used for meat) that can be kept in paddocks.

So it can be difficult telling just how much space "free-range" pigs really have as PROOF is the only certification with restrictions of 40 grower pigs per hectare in a rotational grazing system.

Other concerns raised about the treatment of pigs include the use of sow stalls and farrowing crates, teeth clipping and tail docking, as well as the use of drugs such as lean muscle-building Ractopamine.

The use of 'Accreditation Systems' (such as those below), can provide some guidance on the welfare standards in which a pig was raised.

	OUTDOOR ACCESS	TEETH CLIPPING/ TAIL DOCKING PROHIBITED	RACTOPAMINE PROHIBITED	SOW STALLS / FARROWING CRATES PROHIBITED	WEANING AGE
	Piglets are housed indoors after weaning	X	X	✓	3 - 4 weeks
	✓	X	X	✓	4 weeks
	✓	✓	✓	✓	6 weeks
	Piglets are housed indoors after weaning	Under vet supervision	X	✓	4 weeks
	✓	✓	✓	✓	8 weeks
	✓	✓	✓	✓	8 weeks

*Many small producers cannot afford the cost and time burden of formal certification, however, most are all-too-willing to chat to you about their farming practices and many like us are happy to show you how we farm first hand.*



Meat labels get even more confusing? With no consistent or legally enforceable definitions for production systems in Australia, it is not easy to understand what various terms on packaging means. Terms like, 'sustainable', 'ethical', 'paddock raised' can all mean different things to different people.

And we haven't even discussed the environment, health, taste, cost or convenience.

Sourcing higher welfare pork products can be a tad challenging, but we reckon it's worth the effort, especially knowing pigs are one of the most poorly treated animals.

Our top tip is to eat pork sparingly and when you do, go to the effort of sourcing it direct from the producer. It may be a tad pricier, but the taste is far superior, you'll need less and you can be confident that the pigs had a better life.





## Our pork...

We love sharing our farm and have an open gate attitude – opening our farm so you can see for yourselves how we say we farm, is how we farm.

Our finished pigs bring back the incredible pork flavour of yesteryear, as a result of 3 important factors:

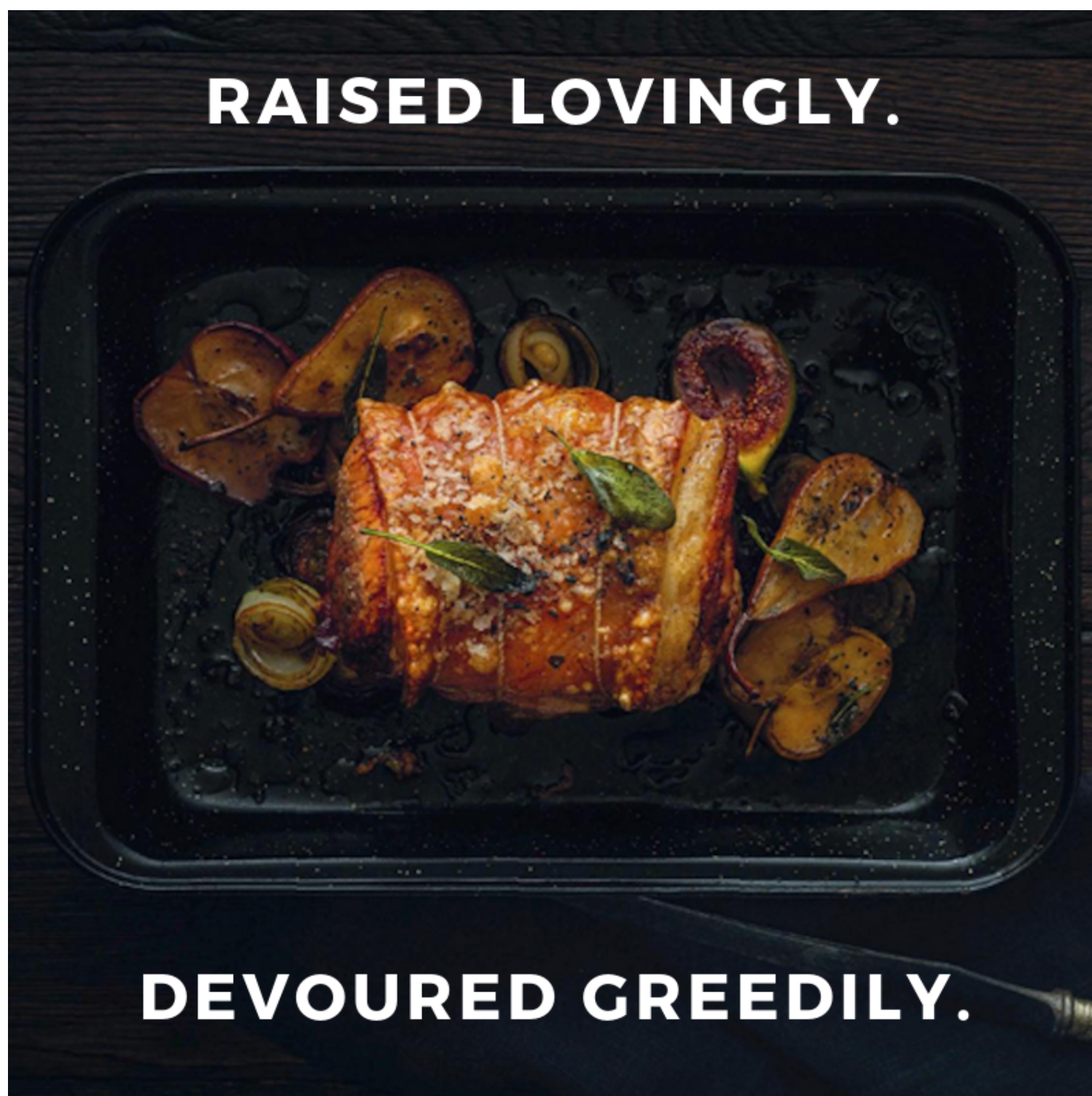
- **Breeding:** Berkshire pork is darker in colour, has a firm feel, tastes rich, sweet and has a clean aftertaste. The soft fat and great marbling makes for great flavour and juiciness.
- **Husbandry:** We raise our pigs naturally on pasture where they are free to root, graze, wallow, play and consume a diverse diet.
- **Production:** Our range of products are traditionally cured and smoked; no additives, no water injection, no growth promotants, just real, natural tasty pork.

***"Good for the animal, good for the land, good for the farmer and good for you"***

We put a lot of love into everything we do at Fork it Farm. That's why, we breed our Berkshire pigs outdoors and raise them naturally on pasture where they are free to root, graze, wallow and play... so you'll always have the confidence of serving pork that is 100% natural, tender and dare we say, forkin' tasty!



We look forward to sharing our farm and forkin' tasty pork with you all. Just let us know if you would like to meet our piggies.



Get the 'HOGS SHARE' and enjoy the convenience of forkin' tasty, ethically raised Berkshire pork delivered each month.

Just \$324 for 3kg of forkin' tasty pork each month for six months. That's only \$18/kg.

Order online @ <http://www.forkitfarm.com.au/wholehog-program.html>

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**This little piggy is going to market...**

Bream Creek Farmers Market

First Sunday of the month

9am til 1pm

138 Marion Bay Road, Copping

Farm Gate Market

Second and Fourth Sunday of the month

8:30am til 1pm

Bathurst St, between Murray and Elizabeth Streets

Lilydale Village Markets

Second Sunday of the month

10am til 2pm

Lilydale Memorial Hall, 1949 Main Road, Lilydale

Oatlands Mini Farmers Market

Third Sunday of the month

10am til 1pm

83-85 High Street, Oatlands

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## Hog share deliveries

If you haven't yet got you order in, hurry, we're making March deliveries soon!

Hobart, Oatlands, Perth Sunday 7 April

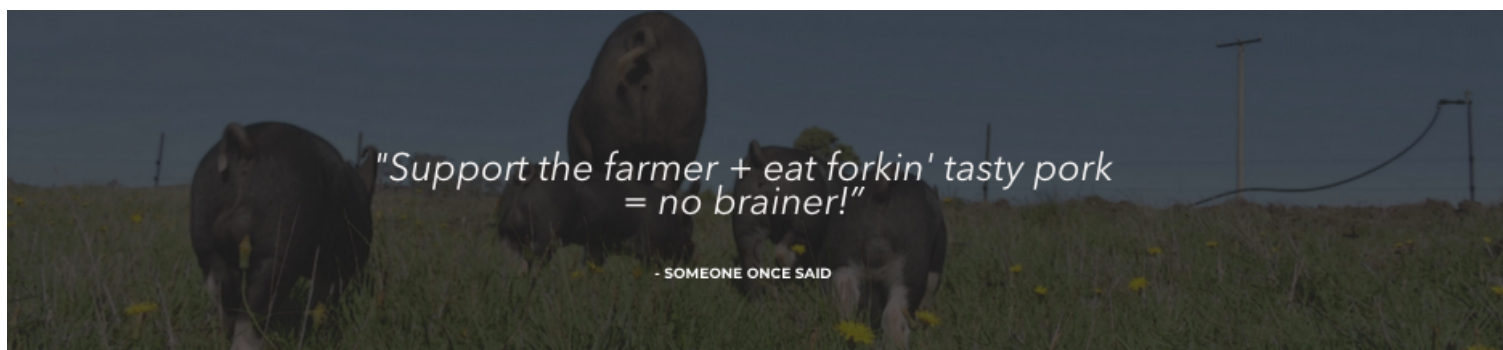
Devonport Monday 1 April

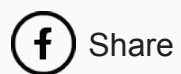
Scottsdale and St Helens Friday 12 April

Launceston and Lilydale 12-14 April

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Missed a past issue of PIGS 'N MUD? Find them [here](#).





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\*FORKITFARM@GMAIL.COM\*

[www.forkitfarm.com.au](http://www.forkitfarm.com.au)

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