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PIGS 'N MUD...

Hi from Fork it Farm!

It's been a turbulent month at Fork it Farm!

After Daniel's return from a research trip on the mainland, he was welcomed home only to make a tough and heart breaking decision, but we couldn't let him suffer. Romeo wasn't recovering from a leg injury, unable to walk, it was time to say goodbye. Romeo was the first pig to arrive at Fork it Farm, sire to all our piglets so far and gentle giant.

We are comforted however, by the fact that he lived a great life here at Fork it Farm, roaming the pasture, rooting around the ground (and with the sows), wallowing in mud, enjoying an ear or belly scratch, and munching down on tasty apples and eggs.

Just this week, JBS announced the imminent closure of its Devonport abattoir, one of our only abattoir options, effective from the 15th November. After discussions with various government officials and lobby groups we are positive the Government can help provide a solution. Watch this space.

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



RIP Romeo, you will be missed 🥺🥺

From our paddock to your plate...

We love our pigs and we love sharing their life on the farm...we thought this was a good opportunity to share how the pigs get from our paddock to your plate.

Our Pigs...

Our small herd of Berkshire heritage pigs are raised on open pastures. Just 9 sows and 2 boars, means a total herd of around 60 at any time. They are free to root in the dirt, wallow in the mud and enjoy the sunshine.

Our pigs are regularly moved to a new paddock, to ensure they have constant access to fresh pasture and also giving each paddock time to rejuvenate.

Although they can eat grass, in addition to grazing, pigs root around to forage for roots, grubs and other tasty morsels, and will sometimes even eat the soil itself, as it contains a range of nutrients. Most pigs can't live on grass alone, therefore, our pigs diet is supplemented with a specifically formulated muesli mix, waste stream milk, apples, and eggs, and any other (non-swill) goodies we can get our hands on.

We employ natural pig farming principles... therefore we do NOT teeth pull,

Our production model...



RECOVERY

Our sows are given 1 to 2 months recovery time. This ensures optimum condition is regained before the process starts all over.

This means that each sow could potentially have two litters per year.

The production cycle of a pig from conception to slaughter takes over 284 days. Getting it to your plate can take a lot longer, especially if you're after traditionally cured products like Jamon, which will add 18 months or more.

JOINING

Our sows spend approximately 6 weeks with the boar. This allows for at least two cycles (21 days/cycle)... just in case the job wasn't done the first cycle.

GESTATION

A sow is pregnant for three months, three weeks, and three days. During this time her feed requirements will increase as the piglets grow.

FARROWING

Our sows farrow in a farrowing hut which allows nest building behaviour, total freedom of movement and natural interaction between sow and litter. The soft deep bedding also minimises the risk of crushing deaths and injury.

Our litter size ranges between 4 to 10 piglets.

SUCKLING

Little piglets will nurse about 16 times a day for several minutes at a time. At birth the piglet will probably drink 2 to 3 tablespoons of milk each feed... this will gradually increase each day as the piglet grows.

Piglets are curious and from about two weeks of age they start experimenting with mum's feed. At about 3 weeks of age the piglets require more nutrients they can get from milk alone.

WEANING

After 7 - 8 weeks the piglets will be weaned (depending on mum's condition), ensuring they have the best start in life. Once weaned they remain within their family group, reducing the potential stress of weaning.

GROWING

During the grower stage, the pigs are given unrestricted access to feed. During this stage they will be increasing their weight by approximately 500g per day, until 17 to 20 weeks of age.

FINISHING

During the last 3 to 4 weeks, feed intake is controlled to ensure appropriate fat to muscle ratio until they reach target weight and body condition.

SLAUGHTER

The one bad day... at 20 - 24 weeks (or 75 to 90 kilograms) the pigs are loaded onto our custom built pig trailer and taken to the abattoir for slaughter.

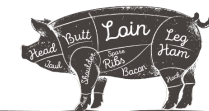
PROCESSING

The carcass (which is now ideally, 60 - 65kg with a 16mm backfat layer) is trucked to Casalinga Gourmet Meats for processing into a range of fork-in' tasty pork cuts, sausages and cured items.

DELIVERY

The processed products are collected and stored on-farm. Hog shares are packaged for monthly delivery to your plate (or maybe just your freezer first).

As pigs are very social creatures, our sows are kept in small pods (or groups) at all times, meaning they're never alone.



Part of our long term plan is to control our production chain with on-farm boning and curing facilities, reducing costs, improving reliability of production and diversification of cure techniques and products.

Did you know...slaughter has to be done at a licensed abattoir to be legally compliant and for us to be permitted to sell our meat, meaning on-farm slaughter is currently not an option.

This process includes some trial and error, this means we continually adapt to refine the process as we become more familiar with the seasons, our farm and our pigs.

"We offer radical transparency! That means that even though we don't have free-range, organic or ethical certification we practice these principles and welcome visitors to see for themselves. Contact us if you would like to visit and meet our piggies."

Not your ordinary pork...



See for yourselves... Fork it Farm heritage pastured pork vs Supermarket pork.

The first thing you'll notice is the colour. A pork loin from our heritage breed of pastured pork is a darker pink - closer to red. That's because it's got more hemoglobin, a red protein that increases as muscle is worked. That darker red colour is what translates to better flavour.

Now take a closer look at the meat fibers. In the pastured heritage pork, they are more tightly woven and less watery looking. That means the meat has a more satisfying texture. The 'eye' of the loin has more fat marbled throughout and has a thicker fat cap.

I can hear the arguments now: Why would I want to pay for a pile of pork fat? To sum it up, fattier pork is juicier and more flavourful. Plus, the back fat can be rendered into lard for cooking.

When you look at these cuts side by side, there really is no room for debate. The meat speaks for itself. We couldn't bring ourselves to do a taste test, but why not let your taste buds decide!

Once you have tasted the pork from a truly free-range, happy pig that has the freedom to root around, forage and socialise, you might never eat any other kind again. It is far removed from your typical supermarket pork... so [share the](#)

(lol) and give us a rave review on Facebook.



This little piggy is going to market...

Bream Creek Farmers Market

First Sunday of the month

9am til 1pm

138 Marion Bay Road, Copping

Lilydale Village Markets

Second Sunday of the month

10am til 2pm

Lilydale Memorial Hall, 1949 Main Road, Lilydale

NEW Summer Edition... Bream Creek Farmers Market

Third Sunday of the month

9am til 1pm

138 Marion Bay Road, Copping



Hog share deliveries

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

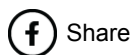
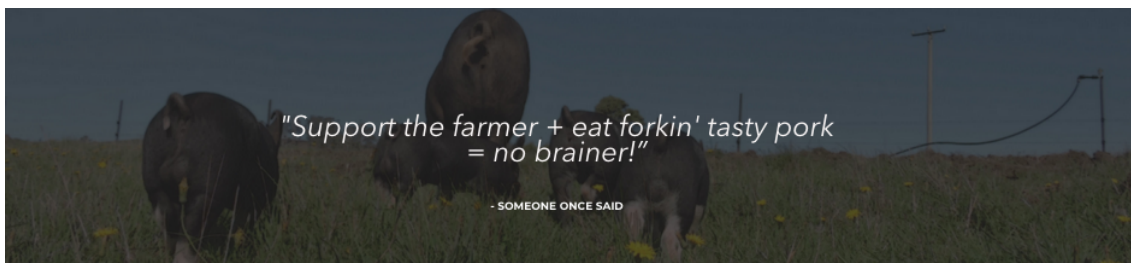
Hobart Sunday 4 November

Devonport Thursday 6 November

Scottsdale and St Helens Friday 7 November

Launceston and Lilydale 7-9 November

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