

Training Series on Agrometeorology and Climate Change Adaptation

Backyard Pig Farming



Pigs are considered as a reliable source of animal protein in households of the Pacific. In Vanuatu, pigs are important for high cultural and traditional values, being raised particularly for rituals and traditional obligations. Pig farming also serves as an additional source of income and useful energy (biogas). This training guide briefly describes basic husbandry procedures and the potential use of composting piggery in rural backyard pig farming.

Did you know?

A study conducted by the Secretariat of the Pacific Community and the Food and Agriculture Organization confirmed that the indigenous pigs of Vanuatu are considered unique in the world. They are well-adapted to local temperatures and environment making them less vulnerable to diseases. Breeding indigenous breeds will assist in the conservation and biodiversity of animal genetic resources in the country.



A hermaphrodite pig is a rare local pig breed that is very much valued in Vanuatu.

Pigs in Vanuatu



Indigenous pig



Duroc



Landrace



Large white



Saddleback



Berkshire

THE LOCAL PIG

- Colours include combinations of black, ginger /brown with black stripes, black and white spots or vice versa with black.
- Body height and size smaller for age when compared to commercial breeds.
- Fairly noticeable long snouts and hairy body.
- Sometimes an excess skin (wattle) hangs from one or both sides of the chin.
- A hermaphrodite pig is a rare local pig breed that is very much valued in Vanuatu.
- Produces less number of offspring compared to commercial breeds.

Housing

- Local wood and timbre can be used to build sturdy pig sheds with either concrete or wooden slat floorings with some access to soil.
- Local materials such as leaves of coconut, pandanas sago palm, natangura or wild cane can be used as roofing materials as an alternative to iron roof (kapa).
- A standard 3m x 3m pen can accommodate about 10 adult pigs.
- A floor space of 0.84 sqm will be required for each head of fattening pig.
- Make feed and watering troughs accessible.
- Separate pens for farrowing, growing, sows and boars to prevent fighting for space and food.
- Adequate space is required for pigs to eat, drink, rest, sleep and move.
- There should be enough space for caretaker to move when providing feed, cleaning, medical treatment and other husbandry procedures.
- For sheds with cement and wooden floors, clean and disinfect pens before placing new stocks.
- Leave pens empty for 2 weeks after removing your stocks for cleaning and disinfecting.

Composting piggery

This procedure is ideal for pens with concrete or soil floorings:

- Evenly distribute 6 to 8 inches deep of dry litter materials into the floor of each pen before stocking.
- The dry litter will absorb all the urine and manure even without daily cleaning of pens.
- Add a dry level every 2 weeks or as soon as the litter starts to get soaked.
- After 2-3 months, collect the compost using shovel.
- Clean pens with water if necessary.
- Replace new batch of dry litter evenly into the floor pen.
- Pens are again ready for use.
- Unload compost materials for drying before using as fertilizers for gardens, pastures and fodder plants.

Getting your stocks

- Good boars and sows for breeding have good temperament, at least 12 evenly distributed teats, long arched back, strong legs with hooves on tiptoe.
- Select breeders stock from large litters (10-12 piglets)
- Group pigs of the same size together in each pen.
- Piglets can be weaned and sold at 45 days old.
- Give less feeds to newly arrived stocks during the first few days.
- Fattening starts at 10 weeks of age at about 15-20 kg.

Dry litter materials for composting piggery

- untreated woodshavings or sawdust
- dried seaweed
- leaves or grass
- coconut husks
- sand

Why composting piggery?

- Minimize water usage and other resources required for daily cleaning of pens.
- Reduce the impact of animal waste in the environment, greenhouse emission and on the health of the community.
- Produce useful by-products (compost) from animal production.

When are your pigs ready for market?

- Fattening pigs takes about 4 months after weaning.
- Body weight is about 40-110 kg.

Feeding your pigs

- Feed weaned pigs 3 times a day until 15 weeks of age and
- Feed boars, sows and finishing pigs twice a day.
- Use coconuts, fruits, vegetables and root crops such as manioc and kumala for feeding.
- Give less feeds to newly arrived stocks during the first few days.
- Commercial feeds can be mixed with indigenous materials such as copra, meat and bone meal.
- Provide less feed if there a lot of wastage in the pen particularly when during hot days.
- Make water accessible to pigs at all times.

Climate Change adaptation options:

- Build well-ventilated pig sheds in high grounds protected from flooding.
- Plant trees around the pig sheds to serve as wind breakers, shade and additional source of food.
- Install rain water harvesting and storage facilities near pens.
- Identify locally available drought-adapted crops and fodder plants appropriate for use as alternative feed ingredients.
- Practice animal feed preservation and storage.

Livestock emergency adaptations:

- Restrict lighting fires in open areas particularly during dry season.
- When bringing to relocation sites, tether (tie) animals for rapid relocation and to avoid losing your animals.
- Monitor health of your animals.
- Contact your local extension officers for assistance on animal health issues.

*This training guide was prepared by the **National Advisory board on Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction and Vanuatu Department of Meteorology and Geo-Hazards** in cooperation with **SPC/GIZ Coping with Climate Change in the Pacific Island Region** with funding support from the **EU Global Climate Change Alliance**.*



Where can I get advice?

- For more information on Climate Change & Disaster policy, projects and activities, contact: **National Advisory Board on Climate Change & Disaster Risk Reduction (NAB)**
Private Mail Bag 9054, Port Vila
Tel: (678) 2231; Fax: (678) 22310
Web: www.nab.vu; Email: commpp@meteo.gov.vu
 - For more information on Climate Change Science, contact: **Climate Section, Vanuatu Meteorological and Geohazards Department (VMGD)**
Tel: (678) 24686
 - For more information on Pig Farming, contact: **Department of Livestock and Biosecurity of Vanuatu**
PMB 9095 Port Vila, Vanuatu
Tel: (678)23519 / 33580 Fax: (678)23185
- SPC LRD Animal Health and Production Theme**
3 Luke St. Nabua PMB Suva, Fiji
Tel: (679) 9747840 Email: lrhelpdesk@spc.int