

# Pigs for profit (Part 7)

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As promised in our previous issue, this part of our series will look at the mixing of cheaper, alternative ingredients to partially or completely replace commercial-type ingredients and swill, when feeding your pigs.

## Alternatives and substitutes

- Cereals can be partially represented by increasing the amount of bran, using hominy chop or brewers grain if available locally. This will slow the rate of growth, but may be worthwhile if you are sure that the difference in price is not cancelled out by the pigs eating more of the cheaper feed for a longer period
- Pigs enjoy green feed and forage, including leafy vegetables, leafy branches from edible plants and green grass. This can be given as up to 10% of their diet
- Waste products can be given as part or even all of the diet.

## Feeding pigs on swill

Feeding pigs on waste products ("swill") is not ideal in terms of achieving optimal growth and production. On the other hand, pigs were first domesticated precisely because they were able to produce good meat (and lots of fat) on a poor quality diet consisting mainly of leftovers and scraps, costing their owners nothing!

Many people who start farming with a few pigs, decide to do so because they know of a cheap source of waste they can use as feed. The following information will



help you to get the best results you can with perhaps just a little extra cost, and to ensure that your pigs come to no harm as a result of the food they eat.

Waste products used for feeding pigs include the following:

- Swill (leftover food) from hotels, restaurants, hostels and hospitals
- Rejected / surplus fruit and vegetables
- Crop residues such as maize stalks, leaves and cobs
- Factory waste (this includes products such as stale bread, dated dog cubes, spoilt milk, whey from cheese-making and brewery waste).

It is important to balance the diet to ensure that the pig gets all the nutrients it needs to grow well. Swill can be improved as a feed source by cooking or drying it before feeding it to your pigs.

Remember that kitchen and factory waste can contain a lot of salt, which could poison the pigs. Make sure that pigs fed on swill always have plenty of fresh water available to drink to prevent salt poisoning. If you wish to farm pigs commercially it is best to avoid swill altogether.

Staying with feeding, in our next issue we will answer your questions on how much to feed, how often to feed and how to feed. 