

Caring For Your Pigs In Summer

Contact us with any questions about summer and your animals

- Pigs are more sensitive to the heat than most of other furry farm animals. Pigs cannot sweat. They have only a few sweat glands on their nose and they have smaller lungs compared to other animals.



- Keep an eye out for signs that your pigs are having problems with the heat. These signs include increased breathing rate (over 50 a minute) and lack of appetite. You can see blotchy skin, stiffness and tremors as well. These signs happen more rapidly when there is more humidity in the air. Pigs cannot get the heat from their body as easily by breathing away the heat.

- As pigs get older, they are more likely to have problems with heat. This is especially a problem when the temperatures go over 80°F, and certainly over 100°F! If the humidity is low, misters can help keep their area cool. But when the humidity rises, pigs need something different. Fans without misting help move air enough to keep them cooler. A plastic kiddie pool in shade is a great place for them to rest and cool off.

- Ventilation is very important for lung health. They need fresh air in any shaded area to remove odors and vapors that can be harmful to lungs. Trees can be a wonderful source of shade to supplement their house. The veterinarians at Herd Health Management can check on the area they live and ensure that the ventilation is adequate.

- Access to clean, cool water at all times is especially critical in the summer months. Pigs will drink more water when the water is cool. 50°F water will keep them better hydrated than water around 80°F. Many pigs will drink over 3 gallons a day when they are small and over 5 gallons a day as they get bigger. Water requirements are 0.3 gallons of water per pound of feed they eat. This will increase greatly as it gets hotter.
- Feed your pigs during the cooler time of the day during hot weather. Their stomachs can produce a lot of heat digesting their food. Cooler feeding times will help get rid of the heat with less stress to their bodies. If possible, feed them a more energy dense diet since their intake will be lower in the hot weather. This also makes it easier for them to avoid overheating while digesting.
- If you see signs of distress, sprinkle cool water on them. They also need shade from the sun where to rest calmly. This should have good ventilation with at least 8 square feet per pig to 100 lbs. Use 15 square feet for pigs that are bigger than that.

If you have questions, please contact the veterinarians from

[Herd Health Management](#) at 480-899-5088.

They are available 24/7 to help out!