

Our Pig Buddies and Hot Weather!

Hi Friends!

Wow, it's kinda hot out here in Arizona right now!

My fellow pig buddies and I are more sensitive to the heat than most of your other furry family members. This is because we can't sweat (I only have a few sweat glands on my nose!) Have smaller lungs compared to other animals and don't forget the chubby around our middle!



Keep an eye out for signs I am having problems with the heat. Things like increased breathing rate (over 50 a minute) and lack of appetite. You can see blotchy skin, stiffness and tremors as well. Also, these signs can happen more rapidly when there is more humidity in the air. I won't be able to get the heat from my body as easily by breathing away the heat from my lungs.

Also, as I get older, I am more likely to have problems with heat so please keep a good watch on me when the temperatures go over 80°F, and for sure when it is over 100°F! It is not as bad if the humidity is low, misters can help keep my area cool. But when the humidity rises, I will need something different. Fans without misting to help move air around me can help me be cooler. A nice plastic kiddie pool in shade is a great place for me to rest and cool off!

Ventilation is very important for my lung health. I need fresh air in my shaded area to remove odors and vapors that can be harmful to my lungs. Trees can be a wonderful source of shade to supplement my house. My veterinarian at Herd Health Management can check on the area I live and test to ensure that the ventilation is adequate for my needs.

Access to clean, cool water at all times is especially critical in the summer months. I will also tend to drink more water when it is cool, say 50°F versus water that is around 80°F. I can drink a lot too! Some literature suggests I can drink over 3 gallons a day when I am small and over 5 gallons a day as I get bigger! One formula for figuring my water requirements is 0.3 gallons water per pound of feed I eat. Remember though that this will increase greatly as it gets hotter!

It is a good idea in the hot weather to feed me during the cooler time of the day. My tummy can produce quite a lot of heat digesting my food. Because of this, feeding me in cooler times will help me get rid of the heat with less stress to my body. You also might consider feeding me a more energy dense diet since my intake will be less in the hot weather. This also makes it easier for me to avoid overheating while digesting.

If you see signs of distress, please sprinkle cool water on me. I also need shade from the sun where I can rest calmly. I would like a shaded area having good ventilation with at least 8 square feet per pig, for me and my friends up to 100 lbs and 15 square feet for my friends that are bigger than that.

If you have questions, please contact my veterinarian from Herd Health Management at 480-899-5088. They are available 24/7 to help me out!