

Pig Terminology

Boar- intact male pig, over the age of six months typically. Used for breeding. Like bulls, can service many sows & farmers typically only keep one or two.

Sow- Female pig who has had at least one litter of piglets. Used for breeding.

Gilt- A female pig that has not produced a litter of piglets yet or is being used to grow out and finish to butcher. All 4H female pigs are considered gilts.

Barrow- A castrated male pig. Typically castrated at 2 weeks old, all male 4H pigs are barrows.

Weaner pig- A pig that is currently weaned from the sow, weaning can be done at various ages according to farmer's preferences, anywhere from 4-8 weeks typically.

Suckling pig- These are piglets that are still nursing but are culled early in order to provide one whole small meal, typically for special occasions. Many farmers will use this practice for runts of the litter in order to save money on feed and only grow out the best of the litters.

Roaster Pig- Very common practice of slaughtering pig at around 100-125 lbs to use as a whole hog for events, either cooked on a large portable bbq called a spit, a hot box that cooks in a box from heat on the top, or buried in the ground and cooked.

Live pig weight- Weight of the pig on the hoof, meaning pig is weight alive.

Hanging weight- Weight of pig after the carcass has been cleaned and either scalded or skinned, gutted. Head can be left on or off depending on the butcher and how the animal was dispatched. Typically hanging weight (sometimes referred to as wet weight) is 72% of the live weight.

Commercial cuts- Cuts of the meat that are packaged and ready to be picked up by the consumer, such as pork chops, bacon, ham, sausage, etc. This is on average 67% of the hanging weight.