****Pork Quick Facts**

* Illinois ranks 4th in the United States in pork production.
* Illinois pig farmers produce nearly 2 BILLION pounds of pork each year. That’s the equivalent of more than 6 BILLION pork chops!
* The pork industry contributes $1.8 billion and 10,533 jobs of total economic impact to the state’s economy in addition to providing $170 million in total taxes.
* There are over 2,000 farms in Illinois that raise pigs, and more than 4.75 million pigs
* Pig farms are getting larger and more specialized, but the overwhelming majority of them are still family owned and operated.
* In fact*, 97% of all farms in Illinois are family owned.*
* The pork industry is important to Illinois agriculture as it consumes more than 69 million bushels of corn and 24 million bushels of soybeans each year.
* Illinois pig farmers are committed to doing what is right to protect our natural resources, care for their animals and produce safe, nutritious food.
* Pork is an excellent source of thiamin, niacin, riboflavin, vitamin B6, phosphorous and protein as well as a good source of zinc and potassium.
* Corn and Soybeans= Main components of most pig feeds. Corn provides energy and soybeans provide protein and fat.
* 3.5 pounds of feed are required to produce one pound on a pig (averaged over the first six months).
* A full-grown pig can drink up to 14 gallons of water a day.
* 3 months, 3 weeks, and 3 days is the gestation (pregnancy) period of a pig.
* The largest litter of pigs on record was 37!
* The average number of piglets per litter is 12 piglets. Sows give birth to litters of pigs twice a year.
* Pigs are weaned when they are two to four weeks old. They are called “nursery pigs” until they reach 50 pounds and “growing/finishing pigs” from then until they reach about 240 pounds. After that they are called hogs.
* 265 lbs. is the weight at which most pigs are sold. 5.5 months is the time required for a pig to reach 265 pounds.
* The Spanish explorer Hernando DeSoto brought the first pig to the New World in 1539.
* Pigs were among the first animals to be domesticated—around 6,000 years ago. The Chinese were the first to raise wild pigs for food.
* Colonists in Pennsylvania developed the practice of "finishing" hogs on corn (feeding them nothing but corn in the few weeks before butchering them). This practice improved the quality of the pork and laid the foundation for the modern pork industry.
* Pigs are found on every continent but Antarctica.
* Pigs have small eyes and poor eyesight.
* Pigs have a total of 34-44 teeth.
* Pigs have four toes on each foot. Each toe ends in a hoof.
* A pig’s nose is called a snout.
* It is physically impossible for a pig to look up into the sky because their eyes are on the side of their head.
* Pigs rank fourth in intelligence among animals, behind chimpanzees, dolphins and elephants.
* A pig can run a seven-minute mile.
* Today, it only takes 5 pigs to produce 1,000 lbs. of pork compared to 8 pigs in 1959
* Pork is the most widely eaten meat in the world.
* Seven of the most common cuts of pork are on average, 16% leaner and have 27% less saturated fat, than 20 years ago.
* The average American eats 17.9 pounds of bacon per year.
* September 3rd is International Bacon Day.
* Bacon is addictive; it contains six types of umami. Umami produces an addictive neurochemical response.
* Canadian bacon is not really bacon, it is fully-cooked, smoked pork loin.
* Bacon has become so popular in recent years that many bacon flavored products have gained popularity as well. These include things such as bacon toothpaste, bacon peanut brittle, bacon dental floss, bacon popcorn, bacon vodka, bacon mints, and more.
* Pork Chopsare the favorite cut of pork in the United States.
* Pig heart valves can be used to replace damaged human heart valves. In 1971, the first heart valve transport in a human using a pig heart valve was performed.
* A pig's squeal can range from 110-115 decibels. Compare that to the Concorde jet, which is usually under 112 decibels.
* Insulin and about 40 other medicines are made from pigs.
* Pig fat can be used in weed killers, chalk, cosmetics, floor wax, crayons and antifreeze.
* Pig products can be used in making: fertilizer, glass, china, adhesives, plastics, shoes, paint, chewing gum, and more.
* The recommended cooking temperature for pork is 145 degrees Fahrenheit. 160 degrees F for ground pork.
* Ham is the most popular lunch sandwich in the United States (peanut butter and jelly is number three).
* The family name for hogs is Swine.
* Hogs do not overeat. They eat until they are full.
* Pigs have an excellent sense of smell - around 2000 times better than humans.
* When filming the movie "Babe", 47 piglets were used to play Babe. An animatronic (robotic) pig was also used.

***If you would like to learn more about the pork industry***

***and get great recipes go to*** [***www.ilpork.com***](http://www.ilpork.com)***!***