

# PORK GLOSSARY AND VOCABULARY

**Agronomy** – branch of agriculture dealing with crop production and soil management

**Animal welfare** – The American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) has defined animal welfare as “a human responsibility that encompasses all aspects of animal well-being, including proper housing, management, nutrition, disease prevention and treatment, responsible care, human handling, and, when necessary, humane euthanasia”

**Antibiotic** – a chemical substance produced by a microorganism that has the capacity to inhibit the growth of or to kill other microorganisms

**Antimicrobial** – an agent that kills bacteria or suppresses their multiplication or growth; includes antibiotics and synthetic agents

**Backfat** – amount of fat over a pig’s back; an indicator of the overall fat content of the animal; used in selecting breeding stock and in grading carcasses

**Belly** – lower side of a hog remaining after the loin and spareribs are removed; used to make bacon

**Biosecurity program** – a program that isolates animals, controls human traffic in and around the operation and includes facilities sanitation to help prevent the spread of contamination

**Bone-in Ham** – Ham product in which all four leg bone sections remain and all muscles remain connected

**Boneless Ham** – Ham product in which all bones are removed. The muscles may remain connected or be separated and tightly trimmed

**Boning** – Process of opening up the pork leg for removal of the bones and trimming of interior fat or complete separation of muscles

**Boston butt** – upper part of the pork shoulder

**Carcass** – the two sides of the same processed animal

**Case-ready** – meat that is pre-priced and pre-packaged by the processor for immediate display in the meatcase

**Casings** – Fibrous material used to compress the ham muscles during smoking. The compression assists with meat-to-adhesion and helps determine the look and shape of the finished ham

**CN Label** – CN stands for Child Nutrition. It is a certificate issued by the government that makes a meat equivalent statement per their guidelines. CN product is typically used in school feeding

**Cooked Hams** – Cured and massaged muscles are placed in a non-permeable bag or pan for cooking in water to produce cooked hams

**Cut-out** – quantity of saleable meat obtained from a wholesale cut

**Curing** – Process of injecting or rubbing meat with special ingredients which, in the case of ham, produces a rich pink color, unique texture and wonderful flavor

**Demand** – the quantities of a good consumers are willing and able to purchase at alternative prices

**Dry Curing** – Process of rubbing meat with a dry-cure mixture of salt, sugar, sodium nitrate and nitrites, and sometimes other seasoning. This process is used for “country-style” and specialty hams

**Grind** – Gives sausage texture. A fine grind will give a very dense product, while a large grind will produce a loose texture

**Ham** – cured and smoked meat from the hind leg of pork, excluding the shank

**Ham and Water Product** – No PFF requirement. This product may contain any amount of curing ingredients, but the label must specify “x% of Weight is Added Ingredients”

**Ham Water Added** – At least 17% PFF. Equivalent of a ham with 10 to 19% curing ingredients

**Ham with Natural Juices** – At least 18.5% PFF. Equivalent of a ham with 3 to 10% curing ingredients. This ham replaces only the water that evaporates naturally during the processing cycle

**Immunization** – the process of rendering a subject immune or of becoming immune, either by conventional vaccination or exposure to disease

**Loin** – wholesale cut of pork that is comprised of the spine and associated muscles between the shoulder and the ham

**Market-weight pigs** – pigs that have reached 240 to 280 pounds

**Monosodium Glutamate (MSG)** – A common cure ingredient for many ham processors. MSG is a sodium salt of glutamic acid (an amino acid) used to increase intensity of flavor

**Natural Smoke** – Smoking process in which natural hardwood chips are actually burned in the smokehouse to develop a pure smoked flavor. The flavor will vary depending upon the type (e.g., hickory, oak, apple, pecan) of wood used

\$56,000 was paid for a crossbreed hog named “Bud,” on March 5, 1985, the highest price known to be paid for a hog.

The U.S. is the third largest exporter of pork, trailing only long-time world leader Denmark and Canada.

In Middle English, “pygg” referred to a type of clay used for making various household objects such as jars. People often saved money in kitchen pots and jars made of pygg, called “pygg jars.” By the 18th Century, the spelling of “pygg” had changed and the term “pygg jar” had evolved to “piggy bank.”

**Per capita consumption** – total consumption of a good divided by total U.S. population; can be measured on three different weight bases

1. Carcass weight - the weight of pork in carcass form after evisceration, de-hairing and removal of the head and internal fat. The most appropriate of pork produced by packing plants.
2. Retail weight - the estimated weight of the retail that comes from a carcass. USDA currently estimates that one pound of carcass weight pork yields 0.762 pounds of retail weight pork. This is the most appropriate estimate of pork purchased by consumers.
3. Boneless equivalent - the estimated weight of boneless pork that comes from a carcass. USDA estimates that one pound of retail weight pork yields 0.96 pounds of boneless pork. This is the most appropriate estimate of pork actually eaten by consumers.

**Picnic** – a wholesale cut of pork comprised of the lower portion of the shoulder and front leg

**Pig** – term usually applied to young, immature swine

**Piglet** – newborn pigs

**Production** – the number of pounds of a specific meat produced; determined by the number of animals slaughtered/ harvested and the average weight of the animals; usually measured in carcass weight for pork and beef, and in ready-to-cook weight for poultry

**Sirloin** – the distal (rearward on a standing pig) end of the loin

**Smoking** – Use of wood smoke and heat, in some form, to flavor and color meats such as bacon.

**Sow** – female that has farrowed at least one litter

**Supply** – the quantities of a good which producers are willing and able to sell at alternative prices

**Trim** – Trimmings from the processing of meats typically in sausage. It is a trim blend consisting of both 72% lean trim and 42% fat trim

**Whole Hog Sausage** – Meat from swine in such proportions as are normal to a single animal and no more than 50% fat by weight

**Whole Muscle** – A type of raw material selection. At the trimming stage, all the muscles are separated and tightly trimmed. Boneless hams will be made from different combinations of those whole but separated muscles