



# What is animal welfare?



**The World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) refers to animal welfare as the physical and mental state of an animal in relation to the conditions in which it lives or dies.**

An animal experiences good animal welfare if the animal is:



**Healthy**



**Comfortable**



**Nourished  
and hydrated**



**Safe**



**Able to express behaviours that are important for its physical and mental state.**

For pigs, these behaviours can include rooting and foraging, wallowing, and if pregnant, nesting.

Not experiencing pain, fear, or distress.

## WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

In the first instance, ensuring good animal welfare for pigs in your care is just the right thing to do, but it does also make good business sense:

- Pigs that are stressed are more prone to disease, are slower to recover from illness or injury, will not grow as quickly, and may struggle to conceive or carry their pregnancy to term. These things can result in mortalities, increased feed requirements, or reduced production, all of which have a direct and negative impact on a producer's costs.
- Pigs that are stressed in the days or hours prior to slaughter will produce lower quality pork, which may be downgraded, or may result in a negative consumer eating experience.

Animal welfare – or perceived welfare – has a large impact on how consumers and other members of the public feel not only about the pigs in a particular business, but the whole industry.

Animal welfare is a major driver for the sustainability of a pork production business, and features in **APL's Sustainability Framework**:

### Pigs

#### Community Goal

Increased community belief in good animal welfare across the Australian pork industry

#### Producer Goal

A leading industry implementing world's best practices in animal care

# HOW IS GOOD WELFARE ACHIEVED?

Appropriate animal welfare for pigs on farm is outlined in the **Model Code of Practice for the Welfare of Animals: Pigs**, which was released in 2008. The Code contains Standards and Guidelines relating to:



## **Stockperson competence**

Ensures the people responsible for pig care are appropriately trained



## **Husbandry**

Ensures pigs are handled in a safe, low-stress manner and that pigs are protected from or quickly diagnosed and treated for diseases or injury



## **Food and water**

Ensures it is available, accessible, and of appropriate quality



## **Euthanasia**

Ensures pigs are euthanised properly, by a competent person



## **Accommodation**

Ensures pigs in any production system have shelter from extreme weather/temperatures

The Model Code also provides minimum requirements for resources like water and space, and other relevant information, like optimal temperature ranges for different ages of pigs, and euthanasia methods.

The Model Code does not prescribe welfare requirements for pigs during transport – instead, these are covered in the **Land Transport Standards**, which was released in 2012.

Like the Model Code it contains both Standards and Guidelines, and these relate to responsibilities and planning around transport, stockperson and driver competency, and selecting and managing pigs for loading, transport, and unloading. It also contains specific information about how long pigs can be off food and water, how long a transport journey may be, space requirements on the trailer, and euthanasia.

The Land Transport Standards are also supported by APL's **Is it fit for the intended journey guide**.

**Consider how you can achieve best practice on your property.**

## MORE INFORMATION

For a copy of the Sustainability Framework have a look on [APL's website](#) or contact Rowena Davis at [rowena.davis@australianpork.com.au](mailto:rowena.davis@australianpork.com.au)

For technical information, contact Rebecca Athorn at [rebecca.athorn@australianpork.com.au](mailto:rebecca.athorn@australianpork.com.au)

