

All hogs raised for Hickory Nut Gap Meats must meet these standards:

- Have never been administered antibiotics, ever.
- Have never been given added hormones or artificial growth promotants, ever.
- Have been fed an all-vegetarian diet.
- Have not been confined.
- Have been raised and finished in the Southeastern United States.
- Have been raised in compliance with HNG's animal husbandry standards.
- Have met HNG's pork quality acceptance standards.
- Have met HNG's responsible farming practice standards.

In addition to or as an expansion of the above standards, all producers must adhere to the following list of Hickory Nut Gap Meats Requirements:

1. Antibiotics

1.1) All finished weight and weaned weight hogs sold to Hickory Nut Gap Meats can never have been administered antibiotics, including ionophores in feed, water, or intra-muscular injection.

1.2) Animal welfare is top priority for HNG. Animals that are sick or injured must be tended to. If necessary, antibiotics must be administered to animals to treat disease even if it disqualifies them from the program.

1.3) In the event of a sick hog that must receive antibiotics, the hog must be marked and/or separated off from the rest of the herd. This pig cannot be sold to Hickory Nut Gap Meats.

1.4) In the event that an animal cannot recover without prolonged or acute suffering, the animal should be euthanized by the following methods:

1.4.1) Gunshot

1.4.2) Penetrating captive bolt

1.4.3) Anesthetic overdose

1.4.4) CO₂

1.5) A record of antibiotic treatment must be kept and accessible.

2. Hormones and Other Treatments

2.1). All finished weight and weaned weight hogs sold to Hickory Nut Gap Meats can never have been administered any type of growth promoting hormones, beta-agonists, ionophores, or carbadox.

2.2) A record of hormone use and other treatments must be kept and accessible.

3. Diet and Water

3.1) All hogs must be fed a 100% vegetarian diet.

3.2) Dairy is allowed.

3.3) Feed must be stored free from contaminants such as rodent droppings and mold.

- 3.4) All hogs must have access to feed with minimal competition. Farmers must have no more than 10 hogs per feeder hole.
- 3.3) All hogs must have access to clean drinking water with minimal competition. No more than 50 hogs per water hole is allowed.
- 3.4) Feed tags must be available during annual inspection.
- 3.4) Piglets must be weaned no earlier than 5 weeks of age and have dry feed available at least one week prior to weaning.

4. Environment

- 4.1) Hogs must be raised outside on pasture with the ability to root and wallow.
- 4.2) Hogs must have access to food, water, and shelter at all times. Shelter must be sufficient to the point that hogs can lie down at the same time without being on top of each other while under protection from the elements.
- 4.3) Hogs must have access to a dry area to lie down at all times.
- 4.4) During months that require protection from the elements, hogs may be kept in an open air barn using deep bedding methods. Minimum bedding pack is 12 inches. All hogs must be able to lie down on their sides comfortable with legs fully extended without touching each other.
- 4.5) Bedding must be clean and dry and allow hogs to play, root, and explore.
- 4.6) Air quality must allow hogs to breathe comfortably. Ammonia levels must be kept below 25ppm and are subject to testing. 10 ppm or less are desired levels.
- 4.7) Temporary close confinement where the animals cannot turn around may be used for the following needs: vaccination, veterinary care, or loading or sorting of animals.

5. Raised in the region

- 5.1) All hogs must be raised and finished in the Southeastern United States.
- 5.2) All hogs must be processed in the Southeastern United States.

6. Animal Handling

- 6.1) All farmers raising hogs under the Hickory Nut Gap Meats name must follow low stress handling methods. These methods will be reviewed at the initial site visit prior to any purchases of hogs under the Hickory Nut Gap Meats name.
- 6.2) In the event of a sick or injured the hog, the hog must be treated immediately.
- 6.3) Sick or injured hogs must be given an area free of competition to recover.
- 6.4) In the event the hog cannot recover from illness or injury, the animal must be promptly and humanely euthanized on the farm. See standards set is section 1.4.
- 6.5) Needle teeth clipping and grinding is not allowed.

6.6) Tail docking is not allowed.

6.7) Ear notching must be performed with an ear-notcher. Knife blades are not allowed for ear notching.

7. Quality Acceptance

7.1) Intramuscular fat in the loin area is a requirement for all hogs raised under the HNG pork production protocol.

7.2) Bloodlines must be kept on record and accessible.

8. Responsible Farming Practices

8.1) Hogs must be raised in an environmentally safe manner that adheres to all county, state, and federal standards.

8.2) Farmers must have manure management procedures in place that have enhance or do not degrade the quality of the environment, animal health, and public health.

8.3) Farmers must raise hogs in a manner that prevents soil loss or degradation in production areas, allows for proper air quality, and prevents water quality degradation.

