

## Pig Case Study Spain 3

# Two more organic Iberian woodland systems

Small organic extensive oak forest production systems

### 1. La Granada, Aracena, Huelva, Andalucía

La Granada is a small organic farm that grows traditional Iberian pigs in traditional oak forests, the way it has done for centuries. Although the premium paid for organic meat is marginal, it is believed that this will increase in future. As well as having pigs, the farm also has 17 cows and 70 goats.

The farm occupies an area of 100 hectares with a river flowing through the bottom of the valley. It is situated within the regional national park. The farm has been in operation for 3 years.



Small organic farm in ecologically sensitive area



This landscape has been maintained for hundreds of years by pigs, cattle and sheep

The farmer receives a subsidy for producing pigs ecologically. Even though the system is good for the environment with low pollution in a particularly sensitive area, the price received is not much greater than that received for the conventional production for Iberian pigs.

The farm has 18 sows and 2 boars. They are kept in outdoor paddocks all year round and are fed an organic

cereal-based concentrate ration. The sows farrow twice a year in March and October. The sows farrow in an old building that contains small stone old-fashioned pigsties.

Accidental crushing is a problem, especially in winter when it is colder and the piglets huddle closer to the mothers. The old pigsties are straw bedded but have no guard-rails, protection devices or supplementary heating which could help to reduce mortality. There is not so much of a problem with savaging, perhaps because they have the freedom to interact with their piglets properly and develop normal relationships. Sows found to savage are culled. The farmer vaccinates for Aujesky's disease and Erysipalis.

In common with local practice both of the farms in this case study castrate male piglets to prevent boar taint, but use a local anaesthetic to reduce pain. The pigs are nose-ringed to prevent pasture damage. However, the piglets benefit from not being teeth-clipped or tail-docked. Teeth-clipping is not considered necessary because, with smaller litters the sows suffer less from piglet bites and there is less competition for teats. Tail-docking isn't practised because the free-range pigs are generally too busy foraging to think of biting each others' tails.



Farm also keeps cattle and goats

The farm has approximately 70 growing pigs. All the pigs are outside all year round. Piglets are allowed outside after just 10 days. On average, the growing

pigs receive approximately 0.5 kg of ecologic concentrate per day depending on the availability of acorns.

#### Organic extensive woodland system

Date of visit	18 November 2004
Certification scheme	Ecologic (organic)
Number of sows	18
Breed	Iberian
Food	Organic concentrate. Growers finished on acorns
Average and maximum farrowings per sow	Unit has been running for 3 years
Farrowings per year	2
% piglets stillborn	
% live born piglet mortality	Lose approximately 1 piglet per litter (17%)
Average number of piglets weaned per farrowing	5.5
Number piglets per sow per year	11
Mutilations	Castration of males with local anaesthetic. Nose-ringing
Weaning age	2 months
Growth rate	Slaughter weight at 18 months
Food conversion rate	
Weight when sold on or slaughtered	150kg
Transport to slaughter	10kg
Price to farmer	2,000 pesetas (12 Euros) per 11.5kg
Market	Traditional Iberian hams and fillets
Number of stockpersons	1
Number of inspections	Present all day
Health problems	Outbreak of Aujeszky's disease (now vaccinate)
Other welfare issues identified	High piglet mortality, mutilations

## 2. Navanto Farm, Zalmea la Real, Andalusia

Navanto is a small organic farm that grows traditional Iberian pigs in traditional oak forests, the way it has done for centuries. The owner of the farm makes his living as a lawyer and employs a stockperson to look after the pigs.

The farm has 13 sows and 1 boar. They are kept in outdoor paddocks all year round and are fed an organic cereal-based concentrate ration. The sows farrow twice a year in March and October. The sows farrow in A-shaped huts with a corrugated iron roof. The huts are bedded and have an outdoor run. Even though the Iberian sows have small litters of around 6 piglets, their mothers still accidentally crush a number of piglets.

According to this farmer, Iberian pigs do not appear to make good mothers.



Organic Iberian system

The farm has approximately 80 growing pigs. All the pigs are outside all year round.

From April to September, the pigs receive a standard ration of organic, cereal-based concentrate feed. From October to March, this ration is reduced to 0.5 kg of concentrate per pig per day depending on the availability of acorns.

According to the farmer, he was doing good business with his pigs and that they were fetching a good price. Last year, the farmer sold 13 of his pigs to Japan.



The pigs are fed once a day so that they can be counted and inspected



The pigs are free to follow their natural activity patterns including rest and foraging



Nose-ringing prevents pasture damage but is a painful mutilation

### Organic extensive woodland system

Date of visit	17 November 2004
Certification scheme	Ecologic (organic), National region of origin
Number of sows	13
Breed	Iberian
Food	Organic concentrate. Growers finished on acorns
Average and maximum farrowings per sow	
Farrowings per year	2
% piglets stillborn	
% live born piglet mortality	
Average number of piglets weaned per farrowing	6
Number piglets per sow per year	12
Mutilations	Castration of males with local anaesthetic. Nose-ringing
Weaning age	40 days
Growth rate	22 months to reach slaughter weight
Food conversion rate	
Weight when sold on or slaughtered	150kg
Transport to slaughter	
Price to farmer	2000 pesetas (12 Euros) per kg for premium cuts
4,500 pts per 11kg for remaining cuts	
Market	Traditional Iberian hams and fillets
Number of stockpersons	1
Number of inspections	1
Health problems	None reported or observed
Welfare issues	High piglet mortality, mutilations