

**SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS OF  
THE SOUTH CAROLINA  
SWINE PRODUCTION INDUSTRY**

*by Russell W. Sutton  
Professor/Extension Agricultural Economist*

CLEMSON UNIVERSITY

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Recent questions from within and outside of the South Carolina swine industry have been the basis for this publication. Hog production has been besieged by issues regarding the environment and economics. Some of these and especially those environmentally based, are often controversial. The economic issues have been and are still immense while often being linked to the environment. Like many other U.S. industries, the structure of swine production has changed to larger, higher technology, and more centrally controlled (by contract or corporate) units. This has primarily been mandated by consumer demand changes, genetic/efficiency/technology changes, concentration in the packing industry and extended periods of farm-level negative profitability. Market changes have also had a large influence and these changes have been throughout the system – retail, wholesale, processing, and farm-gate.

From a regional standpoint, the South Carolina hog industry has been declining but not near the magnitude of Georgia in the past twenty years (Table 1). Among the primary factors for these large declines in Georgia, include loss of packing plant capacity and distance to alternative markets. North Carolina has led the nation in increases during the past decade; this state had increases in the early 1990's that had been unheard of across the history of any agricultural commodity. This massive increase in NC numbers was primarily due to increases in super large units.

**Table 1. USDA DECEMBER 1 HOGS AND PIGS INVENTORY NUMBERS; HEAD AND PERCENT CHANGE; 1980-2000; FIVE YEAR INTERVALS.**

Year	----- SC -----		----- GA -----		----- NC -----		----- US -----	
	1,000 hd	Pct.Chg.	1,000 hd	Pct. Chg.	1,000 hd	Pct. Chg	1,000 hd	Pct. Chg.
1980	700		2,250		2,460		64,462	
1985	400	-43%	1,150	-49%	2,350	-4%	52,314	-19%
1990	400	0%	1,100	-4%	2,800	+19%	54,416	+4%
1995	350	-13%	700	-36%	8,200	+193%	58,201	+7%
2000	290	-17%	380	-46%	9,400	+15%	59,848	+3%

Note: "Pct. Chg." is the percent change from the Dec. 1 inventory five years earlier.

Source: Hogs and Pigs Report, USDA/NASS, various issues.

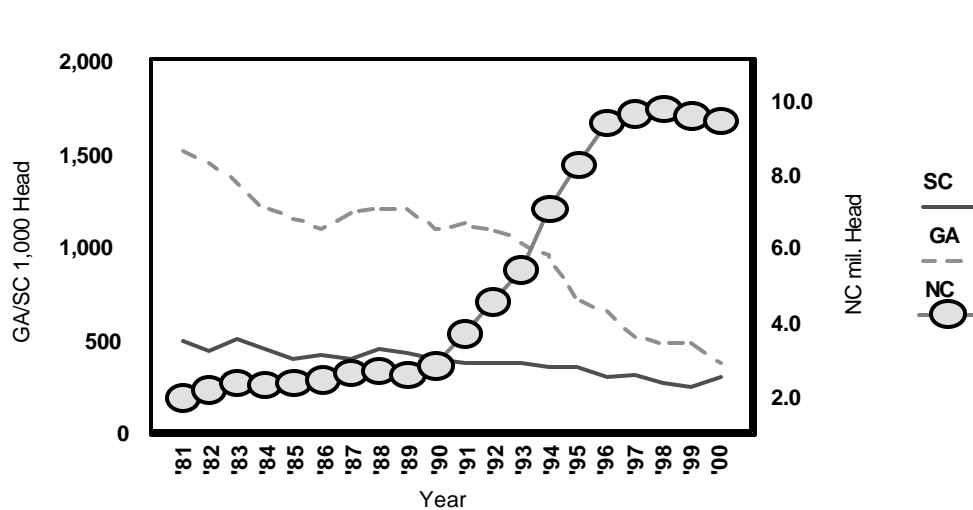
South Carolina actually had the largest decline over the period from 1980 to 1981 when prices dropped well below break-even, there were over 200 thousand head culled from herds.

During the 1990's, SC continued to decline while U.S. numbers increased. On the other hand, our percentage decreases were not near those of Georgia.

The relative annual change between these three states are shown in Figure 1. Again, the large drop in Georgia numbers and incredible North Carolina growth are evident. This massive expansion in NC was without notice as there were public discussions and legislative/regulatory action. There has been a moratorium placed on new facilities starting in 1997 and extended through the present time.

There were tougher swine production regulations passed in South Carolina during 1996. Although numbers have dropped each year except 1999 to 2000, there has not appeared to be a major effect from this. There has been an impact on individual farmers.

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Note: The purpose of this graph is to show individual state changes since 1981; relative size is graphically incorrect; during the 1980's, NC was 4 to 5 times larger than SC and about 1.5 times larger than GA (see Table 1).

Source: Hogs and Pigs Report, USDA/NASS, various issues.

From the most recent agricultural census data (1997), South Carolina inventory numbers were slightly over 300 thousand head on some 1,200 farms (as comparison, NASS estimated 700 hog farms for the year 2000). The 1997 data are shown in Table 2. This table also presents the number of farms and number of head as categorized by herd size. The majority of farms have small inventory numbers; farms with less than 100 head account for nearly 82 percent of all hog farms. On the other hand, the majority of hogs are located on the larger farms; nearly 80 percent of all hogs are located on farms with 1,000 head or more. Farms and inventory numbers for breeding hogs and other hogs and pigs are skewed similarly.

**Table 2. SC HOGS AND PIGS INVENTORY NUMBERS; 1997.**

	<i>Farms</i>	<i>Number</i>
Total Hogs and Pigs	1,226	304,793
Farms with:		
1 to 24	725	6,263
25 to 49	190	6,317
50 to 99	87	5,725
100 to 199	59	7,357
200 to 499	54	16,749
500 to 999	31	19,477
1,000 to 1,999	38	48,136
2,000 to 4,999	27	86,891
5,000 or more	15	107,578
Hogs and Pigs For Breeding	820	36,485
Farms with:		
1 to 24	687	3,993
25 to 49	44	1,326
50 to 99	37	2,404
100 to 199	20	2,768
200 to 499	12	3,540
500 or more	20	22,454
Other Hogs and Pigs	1,111	268,308
Farms with:		
1 to 24	677	5,633
25 to 49	154	5,148
50 to 99	76	5,145
100 to 199	48	6,260
200 to 499	55	16,953
500 to 999	38	22,411
1,000 or more	68	206,758

Note: From 1992 to 1997 (5 years) the number of hog farms declined by 45 percent while the number of hogs declined 7 percent;  
 For 2000, NASS/USDA estimates 700 SC hog operations.  
 Source: 1997 Census of Agriculture State Data, SC, table 31, pg. 34

Table 3 is linked with the previous table in that the largest percent of hog farms are smaller in acreage whereas over 61 percent are less than 100 acres in size. However, the majority of inventory numbers are located on the larger farms as over 51 percent of total head are on farms of over 220 acres. With the exception of the smallest acreage category (1-9 acres), the smaller units tend to have fewer breeding stock (sows) and would more often be a growing or finishing farm; for example, nearly 32 percent of the farms 10-49 acres do not have breeding stock while over 40 percent of the 50-69 acre farms do not have sows. In the last column of Table 3, the average number of head are directly related to farm size – the more acres in a hog farm, the larger the average number of head.

**Table 3. SC HOGS AND PIGS; FARMS AND INVENTORY BY SIZE OF FARM, FARMS WITHOUT SOWS FARROWING AND AVERAGE HEAD PER FARM; 1997.**

<i>Size of Farm</i>	<i>Percent of Hog Farms</i>	<i>Percent of Hog Inventory</i>	<i>Pct. Hog Farms Without Sows Farr.</i>	<i>Avg. Num. Head Per Hog Farm</i>
1 to 9 acres	11.2%	2.4%	27.7%	53
10 to 49 acres	31.9%	16.6%	31.7%	129
50 to 69 acres	9.5%	10.3%	40.5%	272
70 to 99 acres	8.8%	2.0%	22.2%	57
100 to 139 acres	7.7%	6.5%	21.1%	210
140 to 179 acres	5.3%	5.9%	27.7%	277
180 to 219 acres	3.6%	2.5%	31.8%	176
220 to 259 acres	3.5%	9.6%	23.3%	682
260 to 499 acres	8.2%	7.9%	29.0%	242
500-999 acres	5.1%	7.9%	35.5%	387
1,000 to 1,999 acres	3.3%	14.0%	29.3%	1,041
2,000 acres or more	2.0%	14.3%	29.2%	1,810

Note: All data calculated from original data.

Source: "1997 Census of Agriculture State Data", SC, table 49, pp. 98-99.

The 1997 overall hogs and pigs data are presented in Table 4. Of the more than 1,000 farms, over 700 thousand head were inventoried with sales/value of 64.55 million dollars. Of this, feeder pig production accounted for about 12 percent of the farms, over 26 percent of the inventory and nearly 10 percent of the sales/value.

**Table 4. SC HOGS AND PIGS; FARMS, HEAD AND SALES; 1997.**

<i>Item</i>		<i>Number/Value</i>
Hogs and Pigs Sold:	farms	1,031
	number head	711,109
	mil. \$	64.550
Feeder Pigs:	farms	125
	number head	188,912
	mil. \$	6.445

Note: All data calculated from original data.

Source: 1997 Census of Agriculture State Data, SC, table 47, pg. 61.

Hog farm operator tenure (Table 5) is primarily full or part time owners with around 90-91 percent of all farms and sales. Farms with sales of \$10,000 or more, made-up nearly 46 percent of the farms and 98 percent of all sales. More than 94 percent of sales were on farms with \$50,000 or more in sales while these were less than 30 percent of the farms. The individual/ family owned farms were also the major organization type of hog farm. Almost 90 percent of all farms were of this category with 56 percent of all sales. Of farms with sales of \$50,000 or more, the individual/family units had nearly 53 percent of sales.

**Table 5. SC HOGS AND PIGS; OPERATOR CHARACTERISTICS BY TENURE AND ORGANIZATION TYPE FOR FARMS AND SALES; 1997.**

OPERATOR TENURE:		<u>Total</u>	<u>Full Owners</u>	<u>Part Owners</u>	<u>Tenants</u>	
Total Hogs and Pigs	<i>farms</i>	1,031	486	457	88	
	<i>\$1,000</i>	64,550	33,775	24,317	6,458	
Sales of \$10,000 or More	<i>farms</i>	471	152	276	43	
	<i>\$1,000</i>	63,313	33,040	23,903	6,307	
Sales of \$50,000 or More	<i>farms</i>	137	51	75	11	
	<i>\$1,000</i>	59,661	31,959	21,656	6,046	
ORGANIZATION TYPE:		<u>Total</u>	<u>Indiv./Family</u>	<u>Partnership</u>	<u>Family Held Corporation</u>	<u>Other Than Family Corp.</u>
Total Hogs and Pigs	<i>farms</i>	1,031	927	65	27	5
	<i>\$1,000</i>	64,550	36,160	(d)	12,170	2,441
Sales of \$50,000 or More	<i>farms</i>	137	86	27	19	3
	<i>\$1,000</i>	59,661	31,613	(d)	(d)	(d)

Note: (d) = data withheld to avoid disclosing data for individual farms.

Source: 1997 Census of Agriculture State Data, SC, table 46, pg. 45 and table 47, pg. 55

The agricultural census classification data by the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) are reported in the next four tables. These data represent approximately 45 percent of all South Carolina hog farms. It is often reported that these data may be slightly skewed toward larger units but this may not be this case, at least in significant numbers, as there are a substantial number of small-sized farms for hogs and pigs included in the NAICS.

Based on the 1997 NAICS census data, there were nearly 550 SC hog farms (Table 6) with average farm size of 143 acres. The estimated value of land and buildings for these farms was 108.4 million dollars with the estimated market value for machinery and equipment of 19.7 million dollars. The average per farm value of land and buildings was almost \$197,500 and the value of machinery and equipment was about \$35,800. This would be an average investment of over \$233,000 per farm for these two major categories.

**Table 6. SC HOGS AND PIGS; AVERAGE FARM SIZE; ESTIMATED VALUE OF LAND AND BUILDINGS AND MACHINERY/EQUIPMENT; NAICS; 1997**

<i>Item</i>		<i>Number/Value</i>
Average Size of Farm:	acres	143
Estimated Value of Land and Buildings:	farms	549
	Mil. \$	108.425
Average Per Farm	dollars	197,496
Average Per Acre	dollars	1,543
Estimated Mkt. Value of Machinery/Equipment:	Mil. \$	19.700
Average Per Farm	dollars	35,883 calc

Notes: NAICS=North American Industry Classification System  
 SC Hog and Pig Farms classified as NAICS account for 44.8 percent of all SC Hog Farms.  
 Value units changed to mil. \$.

Source: 1997 Census of Agriculture State Data, SC, table 51, pg. 125 and pg. 133

**Table 7. SC HOGS AND PIGS; AVERAGE FARM SIZE; ESTIMATED VALUE OF LAND AND BUILDINGS AND MACHINERY/EQUIPMENT; NAICS; 1997**

<i>Item</i>		<i>Number/Value</i>
Total Farm Production Expenses:	Mil. \$	47.284
Average Per Farm	dollars	86,182
Livestock & Poultry Purchased	Mil. \$	7.909
Feed	Mil. \$	20.297
Seeds, Bulbs, Plants, and Trees	Mil. \$	0.448
Commercial Fertilizer	Mil. \$	1.646

Agricultural Chemicals	Mil. \$	1.243
Petroleum Products	Mil. \$	1.425
Electricity	Mil. \$	0.834
Hired Farm Labor	Mil. \$	4.358
Repair and Maintenance	Mil. \$	1.769
Customwork, Machine Hire, Rental Mach/Equip	Mil. \$	0.338
Interest	Mil. \$	1.640
Cash Rent	Mil. \$	0.669
Property Taxes	Mil. \$	0.527
Other	Mil. \$	4.181 (calc.)

Notes: NAICS=North American Industry Classification System

SC Hog and Pig Farms classified as NAICS account for 44.8 percent of all SC Hog Farms.

Value units changed to mil. \$.

Source: 1997 Census of Agriculture State Data, SC, table 51, pg. 127 and pg. 129

1997 NAICS hog farm expenses are estimated in Table 7. The total reported expenses were over \$47.2 million with the average per farm of \$86,182. The largest category of expenses was feed (over \$20 mil.), followed by livestock purchased (\$7.9 mil.) and hired labor (\$4.4 mil.). NAICS hog farms also had expenditures of over one million dollars for fertilizer, chemicals, repair and maintenance, and interest.

NAICS operators by tenure, Table 8, were consistent with Table 5. In the latter table, 61 percent of the operators were full owners, 31 percent part owners and 8 percent tenants. White operators accounted for 61 percent of the operations while black and other races were 39 percent. For operators by tenure/race, black and other race full owner operators were 64 percent while white operators were 59 percent. There were 94 percent of SC operators that were male while the average age of all operators was 56 years. The average age of hog operators was slightly younger than for all SC farmers.

**Table 8. SC HOGS AND PIGS; OPERATOR SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS; NAICS; 1997**

<i>Characteristic</i>	<i>Percent</i>
All Operators by Tenure	
Full Owners	61%
Part Owners	31%
Tenants	8%
All Operators by Race	
White	61%
Black & Other Races	39%
All Operators by Tenure/Race	
White	
Full Owners	59%
Part Owners	33%
Tenants	8%

Black & Other Races	
Full Owners	64%
Part Owners	28%
Tenants	9%
All Operators by Sex	
Male	94%
Female	6%
All Operators by Age	
Average Age (years)	56.0

Notes: All data calculated from original data.

NAICS=North American Industry Classification System.

Source: 1997 Census of Agriculture State Data, SC, table 51, pg. 135.

SC hog farms have a large variety of other enterprises. From Table 9, beef enterprises (beef cows and steers, bulls, etc.) were the most popular joint livestock enterprise. For crops, corn and hay were most often on hog farms.

**Table 9. SC HOGS AND PIGS; OTHER ENTERPRISES ON HOG FARMS; PERCENT OF FARMS; NAICS; 1997**

<i>Farm Enterprise</i>	<i>Percent of Hog Farms With</i>
Livestock Inventory:	
Beef Cows	22%
Milk Cows	3%
Heifers and Heifer Calves	21%
Steers, Bulls, etc.	25%
Poultry-Layers and Pullets	11%
Poultry-Broilers	1%
Poultry-Turkeys	3%
Horses and Ponies	10%
Goats	12%
Crops Harvested:	
Corn for Grain/Seed	41%
Wheat for Grain	8%
Barley/Oats for Grain	7%
Cotton	2%
Tobacco	3%
Soybeans for Beans	12%
Peanuts	1%
Hay-Alfalfa, Other Tame Hay, etc.	16%

Hay-Other Than Alfalfa, etc.	13%
Vegetables for Sale	3%
Land in Orchards	1%
Peaches	1%

Notes: All data calculated from original data.

NAICS=North American Industry Classification System.

Source: 1997 Census of Agriculture State Data, SC, table 51, pp. 137-143.

South Carolina county values for farms and inventories (Table 10) are reported from 1997 agricultural census data. The largest five counties in number of hog farms were: Orangeburg, Williamsburg, Berkeley, Dorchester, and Aiken. The counties with the largest inventories were: Dillon, Orangeburg, Horry, and Clarendon. The counties with the smallest inventories tended to be in the upper region of the state.

**Table 10. SC HOGS AND PIGS; COUNTY INVENTORY CATEGORIES; AVERAGE HEAD PER FARM; AVERAGE ACRES OF FARM LAND PER HEAD; 1997.**

<i>County</i>	<i>Hog Farms (no.)</i>	<i>Total Farm Land-All Farms (ac.)</i>	<i>Inventory Categories Hogs/County (No. Head Range)</i>	<i>Avg. Head /Hog Farm</i>	<i>Avg. Total Farm Acres /Head</i>
ABBEVILLE	11	81,245	0-100	18.0	410
AIKEN	57	134,069	2,000-5,000	56.3	42
ALLENDALE	6	91,891	200-500	47.3	324
ANDERSON	26	165,896	1,000-2,000	66.3	96
BAMBERG	25	100,925	5,000-10,000	385.9	10
BARNWELL	26	97,084	5,000-10,000	310-625	6-12 e
BEAUFORT	8	39,147	200-500	34.1	143
BERKELEY	68	51,426	2,000-5,000	48.1	16
CALHOUN	27	102,296	10,000-25,000	422.2	9
CHARLESTON	15	44,082	200-500	14.0	210
CHEROKEE	6	64,770	0-100	10.7	1,012
CHESTER	4	80,691	500-1,000	180-360	56-113 e
CHESTERFIELD	14	124,282	200-500	21.1	420
CLARENDON	50	142,216	25,000-50,000	573.1	5
COLLETON	52	154,829	5,000-10,000	128.4	23
DARLINGTON	20	158,132	500-1,000	48.3	164
DILLON	18	91,088	50,000 & over	3,648.3	1
DORCHESTER	57	65,333	5,000-10,000	114.6	10
EDGEFIELD	7	71,425	500-1,000	91-182	56-112 e
FAIRFIELD	2	46,609	0-100	5-11	2,120-4,240 e
FLORENCE	31	168,600	5,000-10,000	177.7	31
GEORGETOWN	33	53,168	5,000-10,000	185.2	9
GREENVILLE	20	70,382	500-1,000	40.5	87
GREENWOOD	11	68,065	0-100	3.1	2,002
HAMPTON	29	117,387	1,000-2,000	67.6	60
HORRY	52	183,590	25,000-50,000	709.7	5
JASPER	19	68,151	500-1,000	41.2	87
KERSHAW	17	72,625	500-1,000	51-102	42-84 e
LANCASTER	15	75,181	200-500	17.8	282
LAURENS	18	126,761	0-100	3.6	1,950
LEE	13	119,741	1,000-2,000	135.4	68

LEXINGTON	44	93,408	2,000-5,000	64.2	33
MCCORMICK	2	20,306	0-100	21-43	240-485 e
MARION	21	80,158	0-100	2.4	1,603
MARLBORO	6	116,548	0-100	3.5	5,550
NEWBERRY	24	94,597	10,000-25,000	445.2	9
OCONEE	12	66,497	1,000-2,000	90.0	62
ORANGEBURG	135	271,709	25,000-50,000	282.2	7
PICKENS	13	46,862	500-1,000	52.8	68
RICHLAND	24	56,579	500-1,000	25.3	93
SALUDA	15	111,376	1,000-2,000	70.1	106
SPARTANBURG	15	106,937	200-500	20.5	348
SUMTER	50	139,411	10,000-25,000	229.5	12
UNION	8	53,142	0-100	6.8	984
WILLIAMSBURG	83	189,415	10,000-25,000	131.5	17
YORK	17	115,420	1,000-2,000	60-119	57-114 e

Notes: e = County data not reported; estimated from 1992 data.

Data (except Hog Farms and Total Farm Land) calculated from original data.

Source: 1997 Census of Agriculture State Data, SC, table 15, pp.300-305

The county data are summarized by inventory categories in Table 11. The two largest categories in the previous table are combined to include the 25,000 head and over class. The size of inventory category was directly related to the number of hog farms; those counties with the most head had the highest average number of hog farms. Hogs by category also tended to be located in the larger counties as measured by total farm land. As expected, the average total farm acres per head increased as the size category declined.

**Table 11. SC HOGS AND PIGS; INVENTORY CATEGORIES; COUNTIES PER CATEGORY; AVERAGE HEAD PER FARM; AVERAGE ACRES OF FARM LAND PER HEAD; 1997.**

<i>Inventory Category (head range)</i>	<i>Number of Co's./Category (num.)</i>	<i>Avg. Num. Hog Farms/County (num.)</i>	<i>Avg. Co. Farm Land-All Farms (avg. co. ac.)</i>	<i>Avg. Total Farm Acres /Head</i>
25,000 & over	4	64	172,151	5
10,000-25,000	4	46	131,430	12
5,000-10,000	6	37	106,657	14
2,000-5,000	3	56	92,968	30
1,000-2,000	6	19	116,053	65
500-1,000	8	16	78,106	62
200-500	6	12	80,253	288
0-100	9	9	73,067	1,501

Note: data calculated from census data – see table 10 for original data.

Source: 1997 Census of Agriculture State Data, SC, table 15, pp.300-305