

(Stuff I lifted from the Internet)

The Benefits of Pastured Pork

- A. The vast majority of pork produced in the United States comes from huge confinement operations. Large confinement farms are notoriously inhumane and are among the worst polluters of air and water of any agricultural operation.
- B. Raising pigs on pasture is not only humane and natural for the animals; it is environmentally sound and produces meat that is more nutritious and more flavorful.
- C. Pastured pork has higher levels of Vitamin E, healthy Omega-3 fatty acids and many other nutrients than conventionally raised pork.
- D. Pastured hogs have more than just freedom from close confinement. They have the freedom to behave naturally. They can form natural social groupings and live in low stress ways that suit their nature. They are able to engage in natural rooting behaviors and can enjoy fresh air and sunshine.
- E. Pastured pork is less likely to be contaminated with E. Coli. The antibiotics continually fed to hogs in confinement in stressed, overcrowded conditions have far reaching human effects. Antibiotic resistant bacteria are on the rise and are known to result from the continuous feeding of antibiotics in animal confinement operations.

Let pigs be pigs

The key to keeping pigs healthy is to keep their stress levels low, which means accommodating their natural behaviors as much as possible. For pigs, this means rooting, nesting, wallowing and foraging.

Studies show that if left to their own devices, pigs will spend about half their time rooting. If they cannot root, destructive behaviors are likely to appear. Wallowing is important for temperature regulation in the summer and for the elimination of external parasites. Most producers use feeders with flaps or other devices to keep the pigs occupied and to limit the rate at which they can feed.

Pigs are highly social, and good managers will take note of dominance relationships within groups. Try to avoid mixing strange groups of pigs. Visit your animals daily, and never run or shout when moving and handling them.

Pastured pigs are generally healthier, although internal parasites may become a problem. Rotating pastures and feeding diatomaceous earth are the two most common remedies.

Make Your Own Lard

Praise the lard! You heard right. Lard is not the villain it has been made out to be. But there is a catch: It has to be [home-rendered](#). Commercial lard is what has given this flavorful fat its bad name. In order to make the product solid, the molecules have to be filled or saturated—and that is the type of fat we need to avoid for health reasons. Home-rendered lard is 2/3 unsaturated and contains oleic acid, the same ingredient that in olive oil helps break down cholesterol.

Lard was the most popular fat until the 1950s, when scientists discovered that animal fats could lead to heart disease. But they did not know the whole story. The products that replaced lard in the kitchen—like margarines and vegetable shortenings—would have problems of their own, namely artery-clogging trans fats and hydrogenated fats.

Today, lard has made a come-back. Professional chefs like [Mario Batali](#) even put it on the table or on his [menus](#) as lardo and it is again very trendy.

Best of all, it is very easy to make: Buy unsalted pork fat from your butcher and put in the freezer for a few minutes to harden. Place in a heavy Dutch oven or deep frying pan and either cook it in the oven at 300 until nicely melted or do it on top of the [stove](#) where you can watch it.

Diets high in omega-3s may keep brain from shrinking, says study (From NewsRX Health & Science)

People with diets high in several vitamins or in omega 3 fatty acids are less likely to have the brain shrinkage associated with Alzheimer's disease than people whose diets are not high in those nutrients, according to a new study published in the Dec. 28, online issue of *Neurology*, the medical journal of the American Academy of Neurology.

Those with diets high in omega 3 fatty acids and in vitamins C, D, E and the B vitamins also had higher scores on mental thinking tests than people with diets low in those nutrients. These omega 3 fatty acids and vitamin D are primarily found in fish. The B vitamins and antioxidants C and E are primarily found in fruits and vegetables.

In another finding, the study showed that people with diets high in trans fats were more likely to have brain shrinkage and lower scores on the thinking and memory tests than people with diets low in trans fats. Trans fats are primarily found in packaged, fast, fried and frozen food, baked goods and margarine spreads.

The study involved 104 people with an average age of 87 and very few risk factors for memory and thinking problems. Blood tests were used to determine the levels of various nutrients present in the blood of each participant. All of the participants also took tests of their memory and thinking skills. A total of 42 of the participants had MRI scans to measure their brain volume.

Overall, the participants had good nutritional status, but seven percent were deficient in vitamin B12 and 25 percent were deficient in vitamin D.

Study author Gene Bowman, ND, MPH, of Oregon Health & Science University in Portland and a member of the American Academy of Neurology, said that the nutrient biomarkers in the blood accounted for a significant amount of the variation in both brain volume and thinking and memory scores.

For the thinking and memory scores, the nutrient biomarkers accounted for 17 percent of the variation in the scores. Other factors such as age, number of years of education and high blood pressure accounted for 46 percent of the variation. For brain volume, the nutrient biomarkers accounted for 37 percent of the variation.

"These results need to be confirmed, but obviously it is very exciting to think that people could potentially stop their brains from shrinking and keep them sharp by adjusting their diet," Bowman said.

The study was the first to use nutrient biomarkers in the blood to analyze the effect of diet on memory and thinking skills and brain volume. Previous studies have looked at only one or a few nutrients at a time or have used questionnaires to assess people's diet.

But questionnaires rely on people's memory of their diet, and they also do not account for how much of the nutrients are absorbed by the body, which can be an issue in the elderly.

Grassfed Beef is higher in Omega 3 than fish. Normally a good ratio for omega 6:3 in fish is 2 or 3 to 1. The lower the better. Grassfed beef from Grassfed Organics is much higher in Omega 3 than fish, with a **6:3 ratio of 0.16 to 1**. This information is from a study done at Iowa State University in August 2001.

