

U.S. PORK SOW GROUP HOUSING POLICY

Yum! Brands supports ethical and responsible sourcing of pork in our restaurants. In line with our [Sustainable Animal Protein Principles](#), this policy outlines our science-based approach on recommendations with respect to group housing for sows in our pork supply chain. The position seeks to support innovations in science and research, improve sow welfare and support transitions in the U.S. pork industry that maximize the time that pregnant sows spend in group housing.

SOW HOUSING & WELFARE BACKGROUND

In the U.S., sow housing is heavily influenced by state legislative activity, farm ownership structure and economics, corporate preferences, and consumer demand. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) estimate that by 2026, when current state laws are implemented, state regulations mandating some form of group sow housing will cover 8% of the U.S. breeding hog inventory.¹ According to the U.S. Pork Checkoff, well-maintained hog buildings typically last 30-40 years.² Given the long lifecycle of existing sow housing, significant investment is needed for new sow housing construction, and the critical role that legislation plays in driving sow housing decisions, system-wide transitions for sow housing are slow. Sow housing transitions are especially slow in non-corporate-owned operations. According to the USDA, approximately 50% of the U.S. pork supply is raised by contract farmers and 95% of farms in the U.S. are family-owned and operated.³

The understanding of the science of sow welfare and housing systems also continues to evolve. Leading veterinary science societies in the U.S., including the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) and the American Association of Swine Veterinarians (AASV), have holistic sow housing policies that encourage improved animal welfare outcomes by minimizing environmental risks and reducing behavioral stress. Currently, neither scientific society policy contains a mandated specific sow housing system regarding gestation crates or group housing. The association policies also encourage additional research on welfare needs and highlight the importance of training for proper handling, and the promotion of good welfare within the management system being used.

Measurement and traceability also pose challenges in assessing the utilization of group house pork. This challenge is especially prominent with response to products that use blended meat ingredients.

POSITION & PROCESS

1. Yum! Brands Policy on Group Housing

Yum! Brands supports the scientific guidance on sow housing recommended by the AVMA and AASV, as summarized below.

[AVMA Policy on Pregnant Sow Housing](#)

Pregnant sows are kept in a variety of housing systems. Sow housing and management systems should:

- Provide every animal access to appropriate food and water;
- Promote good air quality and allow proper sanitation;
- Protect sows from environmental extremes;
- Reduce exposure to hazards or conditions that result in injuries, pain, distress, fear, or disease;
- Facilitate the observation of individual sows to assess their welfare;
- Provide sows with adequate quality and quantity of space that allows sows to assume normal postures and express normal patterns of behavior.

There are advantages and disadvantages to any sow housing system and the benefits and harms to the animals of each should be considered by weighing scientific evidence and veterinary professional judgment. For example, while gestation stall systems minimize aggression and injury, reduce competition, and allow individual feeding and nutritional management, they restrict normal behavioral expression. Group housing systems are less restrictive, but could lead to increased lameness and undesirable social behaviors, such as aggression and competition for resources (e.g., feed, water, space to lie down).

The AVMA encourages ongoing research to better understand and meet the welfare needs of gestating sows. Appropriate and ongoing training for people handling and working with pregnant sows is critical to ensure that they are able to provide and promote good welfare within the management system being used.

¹ <https://www.ers.usda.gov/amber-waves/2023/april/farm-animal-welfare-policies-cover-breeding-sows-veal-calves-or-laying-hens-in-14-u-s-states/>

² <https://porkcheckoff.org/news/daily-maintenance-for-hog-facilities/>

³ <https://usda.library.cornell.edu/concern/publications/rj430453j?locale=en>
<https://www.nass.usda.gov/Newsroom/2024/02-13-2024.php>



AASV Position Statement on Sow Housing

As swine veterinarians, our mission is to protect and improve the health and well-being of the animal. Given the variability inherent in different housing systems, the American Association of Swine Veterinarians supports the use of sow housing configurations that:

- Provide every animal with access to appropriate food and water;
- Protect sows and piglets from detrimental effects associated with environmental extremes, particularly temperature extremes;
- Reduce exposure to hazards that result in disease, pain or injury to sows or piglets;
- Allow sows and piglets to express appropriate behaviors and minimize expression of inappropriate behaviors within the constraints of the housing type;
- Minimize aggression and competition between sows;
- Promote good air quality and allow proper sanitation;
- Facilitate evaluation and care of individual animals while protecting worker safety; and
- Provide alternative housing for sows based on evaluation of each sow's individual needs.

There are advantages and disadvantages to any sow housing that should be considered by weighing scientific evidence and veterinary professional judgment. Our role is to teach and promote appropriate stockmanship, which is as important as housing type in meeting the needs of the animals. Methods of selection (genotypic and phenotypic) should be considered for identifying animals that can thrive in various housing environments. Furthermore, we support research that investigates the impact of housing on sow welfare.

Approved by the AASV Board of Directors on April 25, 2024

2. Supplier Engagement

Yum! Brands will:

- Share the AVMA and AASV guidance on group housing with our suppliers and encourage them to adopt this sow housing guidance.
- Share the Pork Quality Assurance® Plus (PQA Plus) standards and encourage suppliers to seek certification of this program. PQA Plus is recognized as compliant with International Standards Organization (ISO) animal welfare standards.
- Monitor the transition to group housing for sows in the U.S. market and encourage suppliers to identify and implement further improvements in sow housing practices. Monitor sow housing through industry reports, engaging with stakeholders and tracking legislative developments.
- Collaborate with industry stakeholders, animal welfare organizations and government agencies to promote improved sow housing practices.

3. Reporting & Disclosure

- To ensure the adoption of group sow housing, Yum Brands' measurable targets will focus on transparency and data collection of sow housing utilized within our U.S. pork procurement.
 - **2025:**
 - Yum! Brands will begin data collection on sow housing practices in 2025.
 - **2026:**
 - As data is available, we will communicate progress on group sow housing in our supply chain through our annual sustainability reports, website and engagement with stakeholders. We expect this disclosure to occur annually and start in 2026.

This position will be reviewed and updated periodically to reflect developments in the market, latest scientific research and our ongoing commitment to responsible pork sourcing, as well as the evolving availability and quality of group housed pork.