Pig myths versus facts

Ten claims, set beside the record.

Some of the best pig stories are true. Some are official wording that is easy to over-read. Each reply is drawn from a government release, a national park, a museum, an official order, or a news report. Where two official sentences disagree, both are kept.

The claim	What the sources actually say
The female breeding herd is all the breeding pigs.	The official England wording is that the female breeding herd "accounts for 77% of breeding pigs." Breeding pigs are given separately as 322 thousand, and the herd as 246 thousand.
If you add breeding pigs to fattening pigs, you have checked the official total.	The official key findings give a total of 3.8 million pigs in England, breeding pigs as 322 thousand, and fattening pigs as 3.5 million. This sheet does not add the parts to invent or confirm that total.
You can subtract England 2026 from the United Kingdom 2025 total and call the difference the rest of the UK.	One official figure is a United Kingdom 2025 total of 4.7 million. The other is an England 1 June 2026 total of 3.8 million. They are different years and different geographies.
The United Kingdom heading "Other sows for breeding" uses the England footnote.	AUK 2025 heads the column "Other sows for breeding." The England 2026 footnote, "those either being suckled or dry sows kept for further breeding," is not applied to that heading here.
The Pig War was a shooting war between Britain and the United States.	The National Park Service FAQ says: "No fire was ever exchanged between the two nations during the crisis," and "the only casualty was the pig." The name "Pig War" "was coined in jest many years after the incident."
We know who ate the pig that started the crisis.	The same official FAQ says: "We do not know who ate the pig (a question we're asked everyday during the summer months)."
Medical insulin still comes, in official museum wording, from pigs.	The Science Museum Group note on a freeze-dried pig pancreas says pig pancreases "were ground up in large numbers to extract insulin. Since 1982, insulin has been made from bacteria genetically modified in the laboratory to produce human insulin."
Swill feeding, as a licensed system, is still how official wording describes pig feeding in England.	The Animal By-Products (Amendment) (England) Order 2001, in force on 24 May 2001, provided that "the definition of 'swill' shall be deleted," and forbade the feeding of certain catering waste to livestock.
The Tamworth Two were on the run for an agreed official length of time.	A BBC News report of 19 May 1998 said they "spent six weeks on the run and in the wild." A BBC News report of 9 October 2010 said they "spent about a week on the run." A BBC Radio Wiltshire page of 16 January 2023 said they "evaded capture in Malmesbury for a whole week." This sheet keeps all three.
A photograph of a Tamworth pig on the website is a photograph of the Tamworth Two.	The Tamworth photographs used on the website are a 2006 pig with a camera location in Dorset, a 2023 sow and piglets at Heligan, and a 2022 group on a farm in Toogong, New South Wales. None is a 1998 news picture of Butch or Sundance.

ReallyByte — Fun. Educational. Useless. typographic sheet, no photographs. Sources and the longer wording are at pigs.farmyard.im/myths/. Checked 17 November 2026.