

FROM CONCENTRATES TO CROPS: RETHINKING PIG PRODUCTION BY LETTING PIGS FORAGE

7 OCTOBER 2026 | 15:00 TO 17:00 CET



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AARHUS
UNIVERSITY



Innovation Centre
for Organic Farming

OBJECTIVE

The European pig sector is facing challenges linked to sustainability, climate change, animal welfare, and market volatility. Building resilience in pig production systems is essential to ensure food security, reduce environmental impacts, and support farmers' livelihoods.

Organic pig production remains heavily dependent on concentrate feeds based on cereals and soybeans. This reliance challenges farm resilience, increases feed-food competition, and underutilizes pigs' natural capacity for foraging. In this webinar, we will explore innovative strategies for how free-range pigs can contribute more actively to their own nutrition by foraging above and below ground, creating opportunities for more resilient and sustainable production systems.

The webinar will be structured around three lectures:

- **"Fattening pigs foraging on above- and below-ground crops: Effects on growth performance and feed efficiency"** will explore the potential of forage crops such as fodder beet, Jerusalem artichoke, willow leaves, and grass-clover-herb mixtures to contribute to pig nutrition, highlighting their biomass yields, nutritional value, and role in forage-based free-range pig systems.
- **"Herbage intake of grazing sows and effects of multispecies pasture mixtures on sow performance"** will explore the grazing potential of sows, with emphasis on gestation, and zooms in on a recent study on gestating sows grazing multispecies pastures evaluating the herbage intake of sows and the effect on maternal growth and reproductive performance.
- **"The Value of Grass: A Grazing Management Tool for Organic Sows"** will explore the importance of optimizing grazing management for pregnant sows to make better use of grass as a feed resource. The presentation will introduce a grazing management tool based on grass growth and nutritional value, designed to support farmers.

AGENDA

15:00 Welcome

15:05 Introduction: **From concentrates to crops – Rethinking pig production by letting pigs forage**

Anne Grete Kongsted, Aarhus University, Dept. Agroecology

15:10 **Fattening pigs foraging on above and belowground crops: Effects on growth performance and feed efficiency**

Anne Grete Kongsted, Aarhus University, Dept. Agroecology

15:25 Questions and answers

15:35 **Herbage intake of grazing sows and effects of multispecies pasture mixtures on sow performance**

Jakob Johannsen, Aarhus University, Dept. Animal and Veterinary Sciences and Dept. Agroecology

15:50 Questions and answers

16:00 **The value of grass: A grazing management tool for organic sows**

Sarah-Lina Aagaard Schild, the Innovation Centre for Organic Farming

16:15 Questions and answers

16:25 General discussion

16:45 Wrap up and closure



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BIOS

Anne Grete Kongsted is a Senior Researcher at Aarhus University with expertise in organic pig production systems. Her research focuses on integrating forage resources and woody vegetation into pig production systems to improve sustainability and resource efficiency while supporting pigs' natural behaviour. She has led and contributed to several national and international projects on free-range and organic pig production.

Jakob Johannsen is a Postdoctoral Researcher at Aarhus University, specializing in pig feeding and nutrition across both intensive indoor and extensive outdoor production systems. His research focuses on the nutritional requirements of gestating and lactating sows. More recently, his work has expanded to extensive pig production systems and resource-efficient organic pig farming, investigating sustainable nutritional strategies that support both productivity and environmental responsibility.

Sarah-Lina Aagaard Schild, chief consultant at the Innovation Centre for Organic Farming, is specialized in organic pig production and has extensive expertise in the management, housing and welfare of organic sows and pigs. She has led several national research and development projects and contributed to both national and international projects, with a particular focus on outdoor production systems for sows and pigs.



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