

MEXICAN PORK PRODUCTION

Only about 40 percent of Mexico's pork production meets government health standards. Vertical integration is seen as the main solution.

PRODUCTION LEVELS

Mexican pork production is not sufficient to satisfy demand. Many processors import meat from the United States and cut it in Mexico. In concert with the pork producer's association, the government is attempting to simultaneously increase production and per capita consumption through a variety of promotional programs. The Mexican government is also working to improve sanitary conditions and reduce disease. Five Mexican states are free of pork cholera and the disease is being eradicated in 15 more states. About 70 percent of production takes place in the central states. Total production is 9.5 million head, which is more than 800,000 tonnes of meat, plus about 130,000 tonnes of offal. This includes the output of the informal sector. Imports are roughly 220,000 tonnes per year, bringing total consumption to more than 1.1 million tonnes.

According to industry experts, physical capacity is expected to grow about 7 percent annually over the next 15 years, with a 14 percent annual growth in dollar value. These figures include the processing of all cuts, including *chicharrones*, cracklings, intestines, brains, and *codillos*, pork hocks. Mexicans use virtually all of the carcass and, therefore, almost every kilogram of meat involves some form of processing.

PORK PRODUCING REGIONS

Hogs are raised in 30 Mexican states, but the bulk of production takes place in the states of Jalisco, México, Michoacán, Sinaloa, Sonora, Puebla, Guanajuato and Veracruz. The large technologically-advanced hog producers are located mainly in the northwest states of Sonora and Sinaloa, as well as in the central states of Jalisco and, to a lesser degree, in Puebla and Tlaxcala.

The state of Yucatán is rapidly emerging as a major hog producer, especially since the building of new production plants as part of the *Henequén* farm project. Chiapas has a higher population of pigs than any state except Jalisco and Sonora, but most of the production is destined for immediate local consumption. The pork-production industry is not significant in Chiapas, but this could change if government plans to expand the state's infrastructure materialize.