

China Opens 26-Storey Pig Skyscraper, With More Under Construction

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The 800,000 sq meter facility will be the largest single-building pig factory farm in the world, with the capacity to slaughter 1.2 million pigs every year.



Source: *The Guardian*

China is set to open a 26-storey pig factory farm to meet the country's accelerating demand for pork, despite animal welfare and disease outbreak concerns.

Based on the southern outskirts of Ezhou, a city in central China's Hubei province, the 'pig skyscraper' will be the largest single-building pig factory farm in the world, with the capacity to slaughter 1.2 million pigs every year.

The pig farm will provide a combined area of 800,000 sq meters of space, with the capacity for 650,000 animals at any one time, according to statements on the company's WeChat account analyzed by The Guardian. Animals in the 4bn yuan (\$557m) farm are fed through more than 30,000 automatic feeding spots.



Source: The Guardian

Hubei Zhongxin Kaiwei Modern Farming, the company behind the development, has already sent 3,700 sows to the farm.

“It’s unfathomable,” a farmer in his 50s living in the village across the road from the farm told the Guardian. He said he was worried the farm’s proximity could lead to an odour issue when it is fully operational.

“About 30 years ago when I was raising pigs, we would only have two or three in our back yard pigsty. I’ve heard pigs raised in these farms can be ready for sale in a few months, and back in the day, it would take us about a year to raise one. But I think as technology advances, this will be the trend in the future,” he said.

China consumes more than half of all the pork produced worldwide, and demand is only expected to rise. China's Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs approved a policy enabling the construction of high-rise breeding facilities in 2019, hoping to meet the country's growing demand. As of 2020, 64 multistorey farms were either being built or planned in the Sichuan Province alone.

“Intensive facilities can reduce interactions between domesticated and wild animals and their diseases, but if a disease does get inside they can break out between animals like wildfire,” said Matthew Hayek, an assistant professor in environmental studies at New York University.

“I have heard multiple reports of ‘biosecurity’, ‘efficiency’ and ‘sustainability’. We hear the same storytelling for US indoor facilities. However, there is very little evidence that these intensive facilities have any of those benefits in reality,” he said.



Source: The Guardian

Dirk Pfeiffer, chair professor at One Health at City University of Hong Kong, agreed, and said: “The higher the density of animals, the higher the risk of infectious pathogen spread and amplification, as well as potential for mutation.

“The probably even more important question will be whether this type of production is consistent with the need to move towards reduced meat consumption, considering the apparently unstoppable threat of devastating climate change,” he said.

Solutions For Change

Food system change is needed now more than ever before. Rather than continuing to rely on the mass slaughter and consumption of animals, and causing agonizing animal suffering and risking new infectious diseases, we have the opportunity to transform the current system into something safer, healthier and more sustainable.

From plant-based cheeses to cultivated meats, technology is revolutionizing food and agriculture production. You can learn more about the game-changers - the people leading the way toward a world without factory farms and slaughterhouses - with our [future of food podcast episodes here](#).

With animals, people, and the planet in desperate need of solutions for change, what we eat matters now more than ever. And we all have a role to play in transforming the current food system.