



REPORT  
**Pig Watch 2022**

3<sup>rd</sup> EDITION

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OBSERVATÓRIO  
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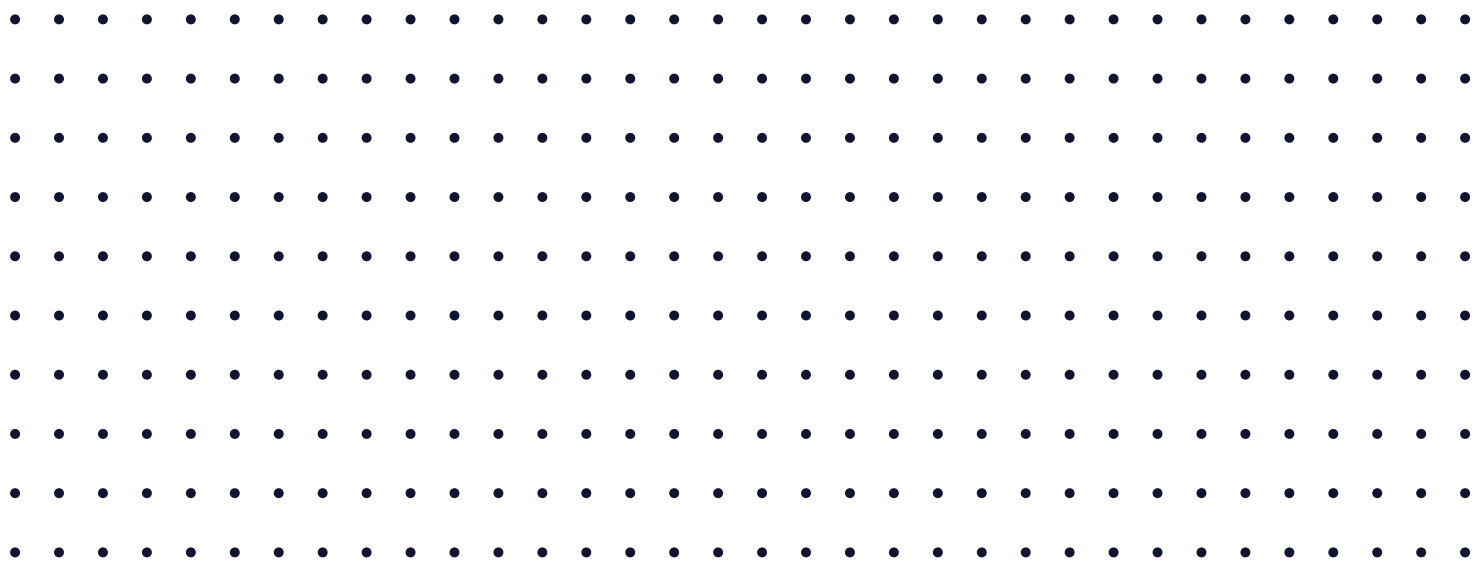
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# 1. About Alianima

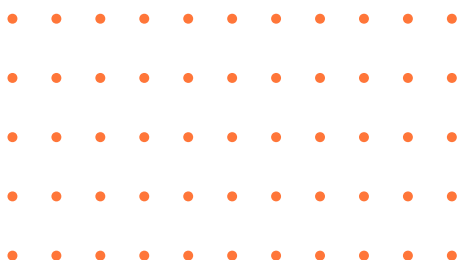
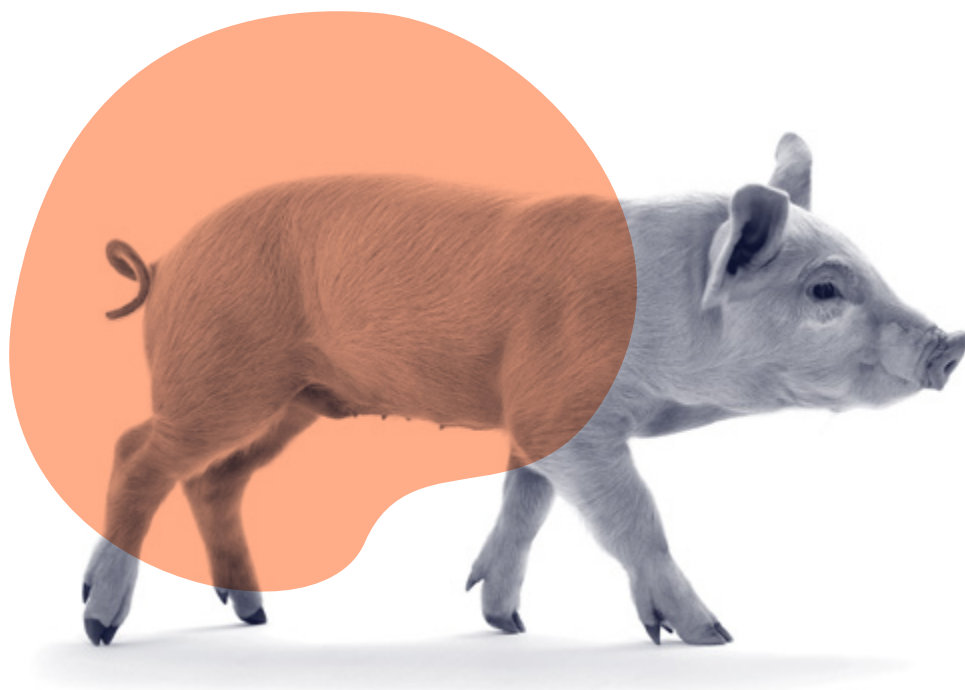
**Alianima** is a non-profit organization that seeks to understand the main bottlenecks faced by the animal production chain, through a cooperative and continuous relationship with food industry leaders.

We develop partnerships and provide free consultation and technical support for companies committed to improving the living conditions of animals, in order to assist in the process of implementing good sustainability and animal welfare practices.

Our team has a technical team specialized in this area, which bases all actions and materials on technical-scientific data, aiming to promote an industry more attentive and concerned with animal suffering, and consumers more aware of the origin of their food, thus enabling them to make better choices.

Learn more at:

[www.alianima.org/en](http://www.alianima.org/en)



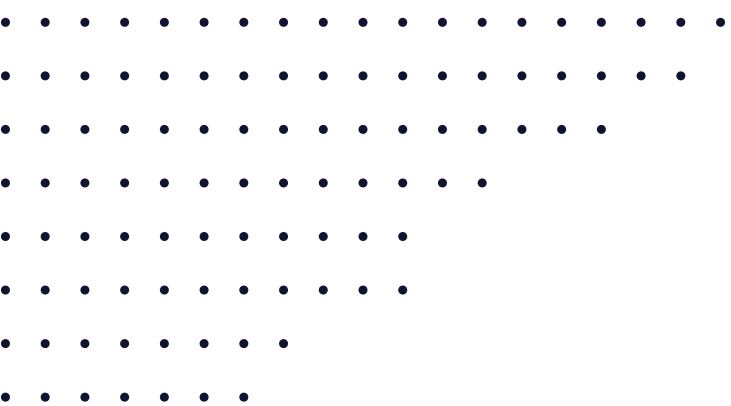
## 2. About Animal Watch

Over the last few years, technological advances in information access combined with growing concerns about health, climate change, and animal abuse have allowed and instigated the search for more knowledge about the origin of food, as well as the values of the industry applied in practice in regard to ethics and sustainability.

The public announcement of animal welfare commitments by more than 170 companies in the food and hospitality sectors in Brazil has galvanized significant changes across the entire supply chain, especially due to the deadlines to complete their implementation.

It is in this context that [Animal Watch](#) emerged, a platform created by Alianima to give visibility to the farm animal welfare public commitments announced by companies in Brazil (currently for laying hens and pigs). The platform aims to facilitate the monitoring of their transition process by civil society, therefore stimulating their fulfillment.

Furthermore, the website offers content and news about our work in order to inform society about the reality of factory farming. It also shows how the industry is capable of promoting significant changes in the treatment of animals and encourages a more critical and conscious consumption.



### 3. Introduction

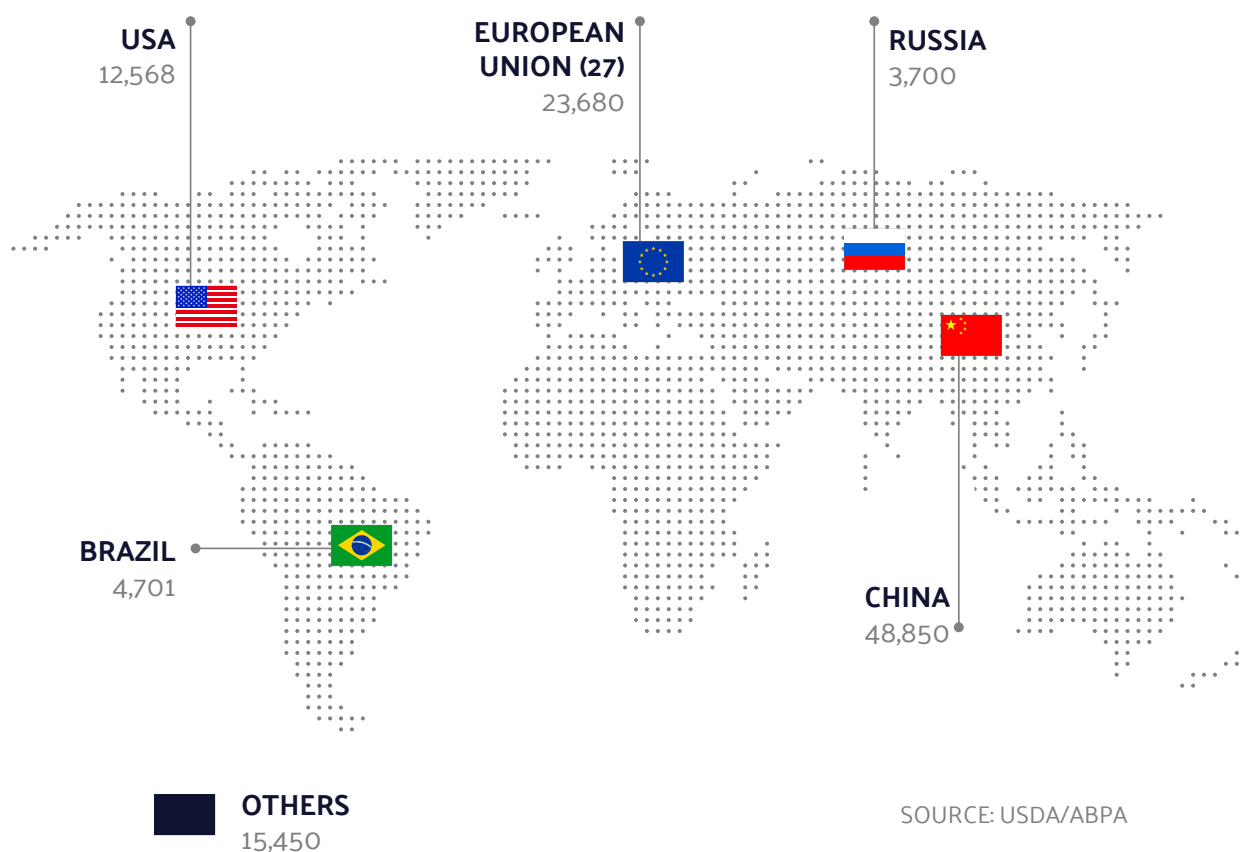
#### 3.1 Overview of Brazilian pig farming

Brazil has great notoriety in the global pig industry, occupying the 4th place in the ranking of largest pork producers and exporters in the world. The country produced 4.7 million tons (Graph 1) of pork last year, an increase of 5.97% compared to 2020, with a quarter of the total exported to 86 countries (Graph 2).

GRAPH 1

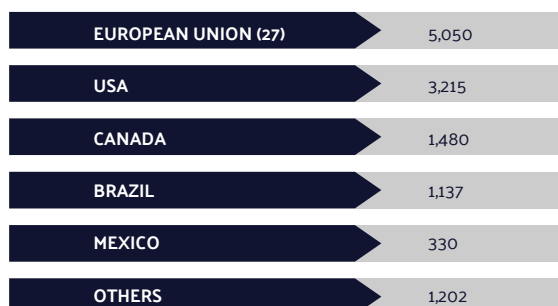
#### WORLD PORK PRODUCTION IN 2021 (Thousand Tons)

**TOTAL PRODUCTION: 108,949**



GRAPH 2

#### WORLD PORK EXPORTS 2021 (Thousand Tons)



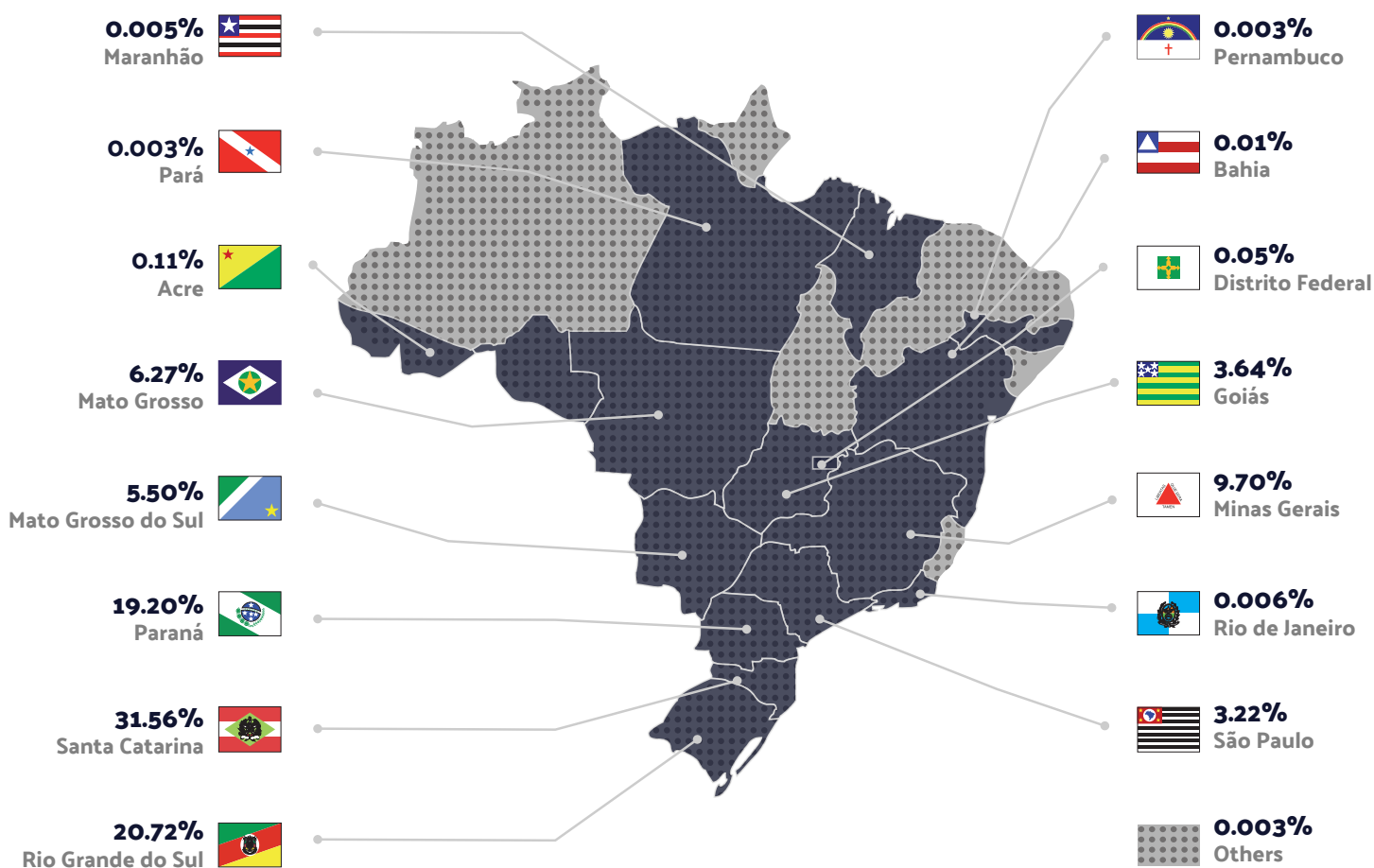
SOURCE: USDA/ABPA



Regarding the domestic market, pork consumption was around 16.7 kg per capita in 2021, an increase of 4.4% compared to the previous year, according to data provided by the Brazilian Association of Animal Protein (ABPA). The main Brazilian pork producing states (Map 1) and their share in exports (Map 2) are, respectively:

MAP 1

## PIG SLAUGHTER BY FEDERATIVE UNIT IN 2021



SOURCE: MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE



MAP 2

# PORK EXPORTS BY FEDERATIVE UNIT IN 2021



SOURCE: SECEX

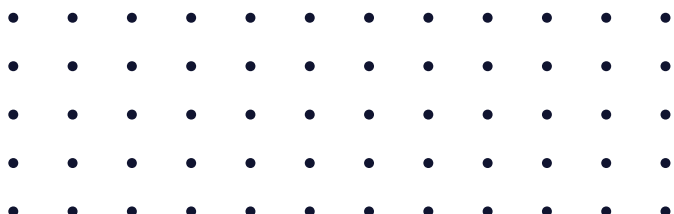
The Brazilian pork industry consists mostly of integrated producers, followed by processing companies and exporting companies. The adoption of animal welfare practices in factory farming is important not only for the life quality of the animals, but also for Brazil to remain competitive in the international arena. The use of gestation crates has already been banned in countries such as New Zealand, Switzerland, Sweden, Norway, the United Kingdom, and in some USA states, and restricted in the European Union (up to 28 days after insemination) since 2013. Adaptation to animal welfare standards by Brazilian pig farming is, therefore, also a reflection of the requirements imposed by the main world buyers as trade barriers.

A major and positive change for pig farming in the country was the publication of the first national regulation by the Ministry of Agriculture (MAPA), on December 16, 2020. The Normative Instruction N° 113 (NI 113), which came into effect last year, establishes good handling and animal welfare practices in commercial pig farms.

The main guidelines of the normative text define that:

- Gestation crates must be banned by January 2045;
- In all and any surgical castration, analgesia and anesthesia must be used from January 2030;
- Tail docking should be avoided, however it remains tolerated when only the final third of the tail is mutilated, and performed in a way that minimizes any pain and further complications for the animal;
- Ear notching is prohibited from January 2030;
- Teeth clipping of piglets is prohibited, and grinding can be carried out only when necessary;
- Piglets must be weaned at an average age of 24 days or more as of January 2045;
- The use of electric prods and aggressive handling of pigs is prohibited;
- Pigs must have access to environmental enrichment.

However, despite being considered an advance in terms of animal welfare, NI 113 stipulates excessively long deadlines for implementation. Given the national scenario, in which the largest pork-producing corporations and cooperatives have committed to banning gestation crates between 2025 and 2029, the fact that the regulation is permissive with a 20-year increase can be seen as a delay. It is essential that companies keep their commitments, instead of adjusting their deadlines according to the Normative Instruction. Otherwise, this would not be a corporate initiative to improve animal welfare, but only compliance with the norm.





### 3.2 About Pig Watch

The Pig Watch is an annual report produced by [Alianima](#) to monitor the transition of companies with public commitments to ban gestation crates in the Brazilian pork industry.

The publication of results makes it possible to create a transparent relationship between the food industry and the final consumer, in addition to identifying difficulties behind the scenes of the industry. In this way, we can identify the main points that undermine a successful transition within the stipulated time for each of the committed companies and support them with technical resources, through our expertise in animal welfare.

This report is not only intended for the sustainability departments of companies and industries in the sector, but is also addressed to conscious consumers concerned both with the origin of their food and the well-being of pigs in factory farming.

[Since its first edition](#), in 2020, the Pig Watch relied on the participation of the majority of the contacted companies and obtained great interest from the press. Through the analysis of the results of the responding corporations, we found a significant progress in the housing of sows in group pens during gestation. We reinforce the importance of the industry being diligent and transparent throughout this transition process.

In this third edition, in addition to addressing other issues related to animal welfare in greater depth, such as the handling of piglets and the non-therapeutic use of antimicrobials, we asked companies about traceability of products purchased from crate-free farms. Therefore, we seek to update last year's report with a comparative analysis of previous data, creating an accurate overview of the evolution of Brazilian pig farming in terms of sustainability and animal welfare.



## 4. Methodology

As in the [last edition](#), we sought to better adapt the questions according to the sector by preparing two questionnaires: one for companies directly involved in pig farming, that is, producers and processors (suppliers), and another for companies that buy pork from the first group, such as restaurants and retailers (customers).

All companies operating in Brazil that have publicly announced their commitment to abolishing gestation crates, by the first half of 2022, were contacted by email to participate in the Pig Watch. Below is the list of these companies in alphabetical order and divided by sector, as previously characterized:

### SUPPLIERS



Alegria Foods -  
Castrolanda



Aurora Coop



BRF S.A. (Sadia  
and Perdigão)



Frimesa



JBS Brasil  
(Seara)



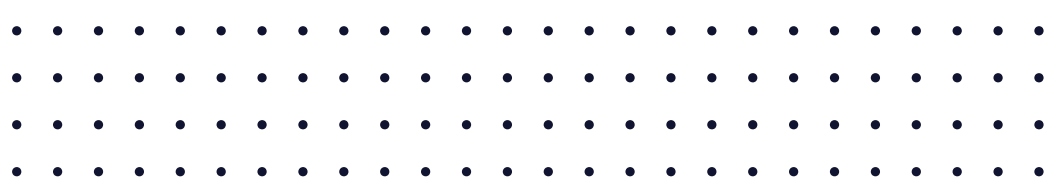
Pamplona  
Alimentos S.A.



ALIMENTOS

Pif Paf\*

\*Companies contacted for the first time to participate in the Pig Watch



## CUSTOMERS



Arcos Dorados  
Arcos Dorados  
(McDonald's)



B. Lem Padaria  
Portuguesa\*



Bloomin' Brands  
(Outback  
Steakhouse and  
Aussie Grill)\*



Brazil  
Fast Food  
Corporation -  
BFFC (Bob's)



Burger King



Ciao Pizzeria  
Napoletana



Dídio Pizza\*



Forno de Minas\*



GPA (Pão de  
Açúcar, Extra and  
Compre Bem)



Grupo Madero\*



Grupo Trigo  
(previously  
TrendFoods - Gendai  
and China in Box)



Halipar  
(Grietto,  
Montana Grill,  
Jin Jin and  
Croasonho)\*



Hippo  
Supermercados\*



Marfrig



Subway

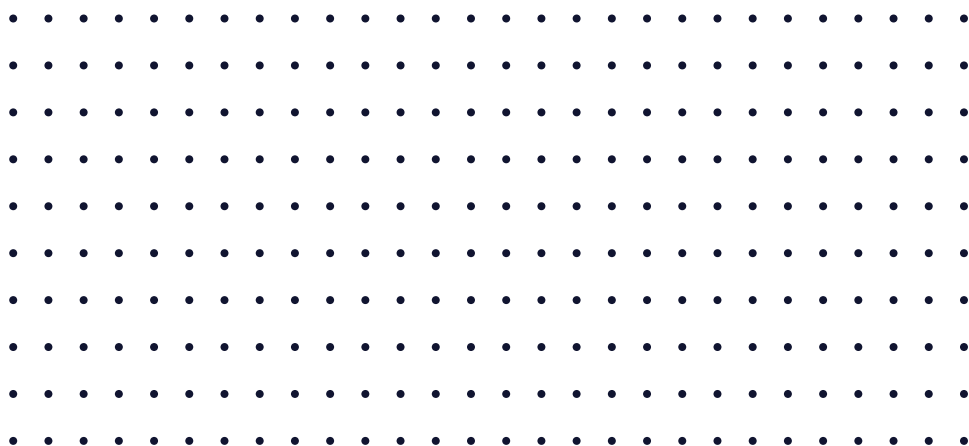


UnidaSul\*

\*Companies contacted for the first time to participate in the Pig Watch

The questionnaire aimed at suppliers included the following assessment and monitoring items:

- 1. Proportion of sows already housed in group pens during the gestation;**
- 2. Housing period of sows in individual crates between the end of farrowing and the beginning of gestation;**
- 3. Implementation of better practices for piglet handling (end of surgical castration without anesthesia, teeth clipping/grinding, tail docking, and ear notching);**
- 4. Use of antimicrobials for non-therapeutic purposes (growth promoters and prevention);**
- 5. Provide customers with information about the amount of products purchased from crate-free farms;**
- 6. Difficulties encountered by companies to proceed with the end of gestation crates, improve piglet handling and reduce the use of antibiotics.**



The questionnaire aimed at customers addressed the following points:

**1. Percentage of pork annually bought from suppliers that do not house sows in individual pens during gestation;**

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**2. Willingness of companies to require other pig welfare practices from their suppliers;**

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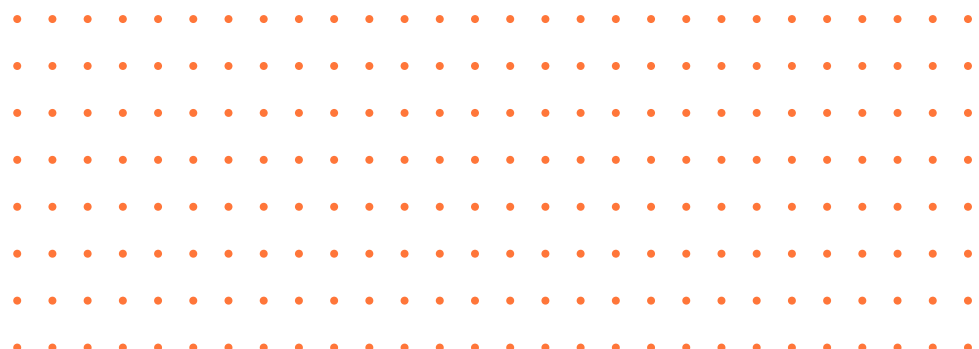
**3. Availability, on the part of their suppliers, of information about the amount of products purchased only from crate-free farms;**

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**4. Difficulties encountered by companies to proceed with the transition to pork free from gestation crates.**

The questionnaires were sent in August 2022 and the companies had one month to submit their data, until September 2022. Companies that did not respond to the questionnaire were listed as non-respondent.

All the companies contacted were aware of the transparency clause envisaged by the Pig Watch regarding the topics addressed, declaring themselves in agreement with the disclosure of the results on the Animal Watch platform.



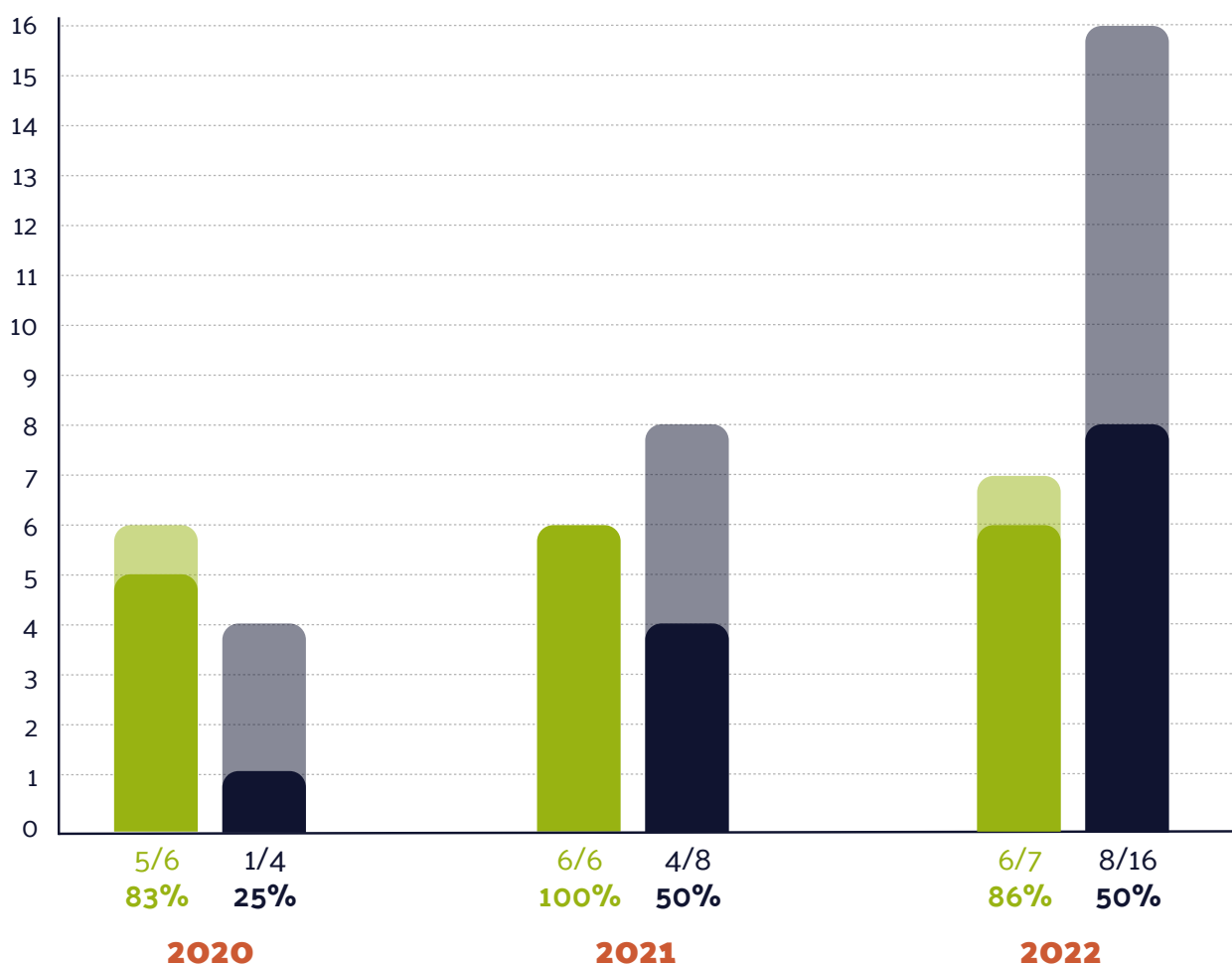
## 5. Results

Of the 23 contacted companies, 14 responded (60,9%), being 6 from the group of suppliers (85,7%) and 8 from the group of customers (50,0%).

Compared to the 2021 edition, there was a large increase in the total number of companies contacted - from 14 to 23 (an increase of 64%), due to the new commitments publicly announced in the last year, especially in the group of customers, which doubled. A greater number of companies responded in 2022, despite the decrease in the percentage of suppliers that participated and the maintenance of the proportion of responding customers (Graph 3).

GRAPH 3

### DISTRIBUTION OF PARTICIPATING COMPANIES BY SECTOR AND YEAR



LABELS

■ SUPPLIERS ■ CUSTOMERS



## 5.1 Gestation Housing

The main issue addressed in this report is the evolution of sows housing during the gestation phase, from individual crates to group pens. As it is an extreme confinement in a significant period of time in the productive life of the animals, it was the primordial change in a welfare policy in pig farming.

The crates have extremely limiting dimensions, allowing almost no movement. In addition to physical discomfort, animals cannot interact satisfactorily with each other, nor explore the environment or build a nest before farrowing, important natural behaviors already proven by science. On top of all that, health problems, such as feet injuries (lameness), urinary infections, muscle atrophy, and behavioral disorders are frequent due to the lack of physical activity.

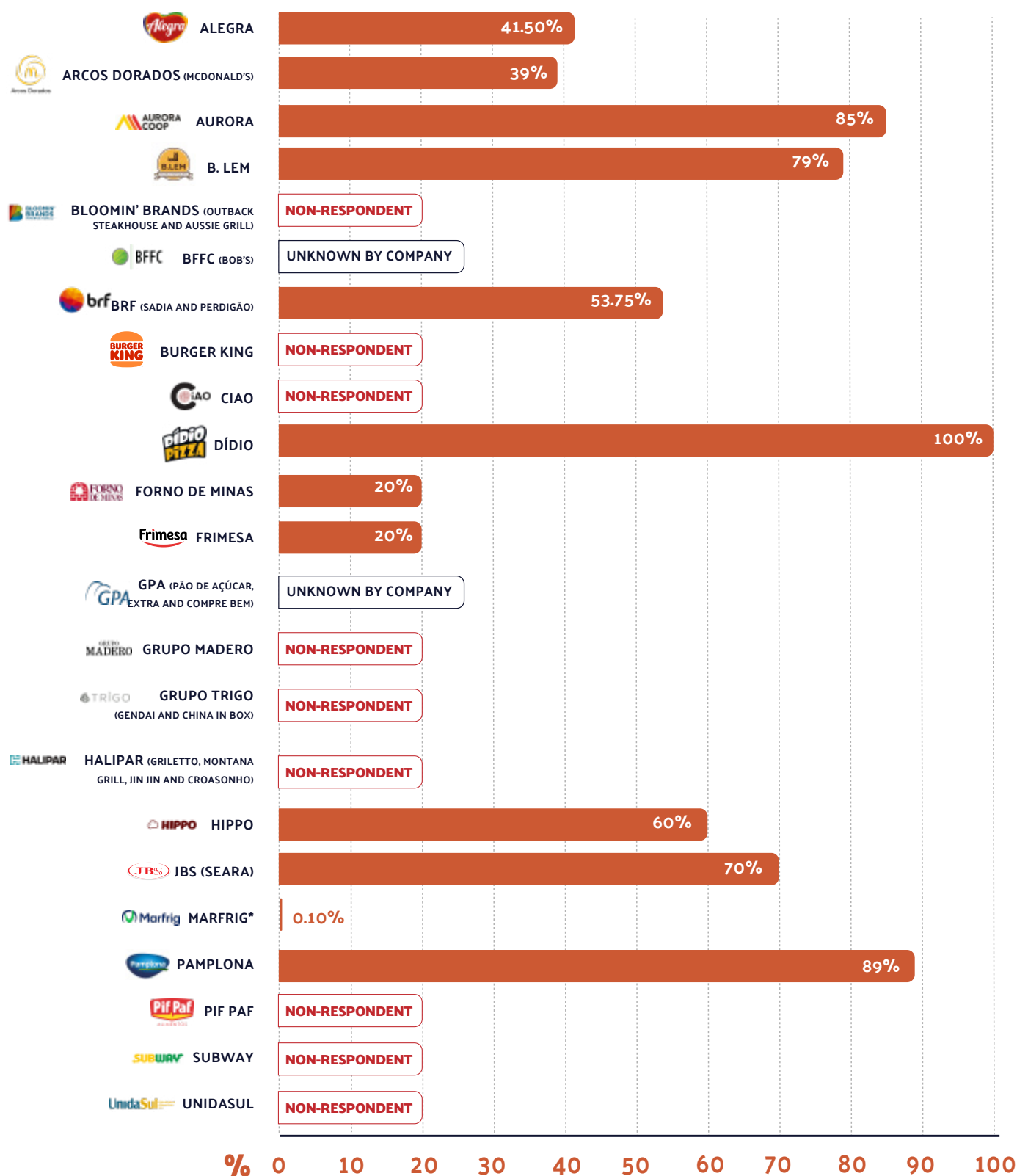
Although new challenges arise with the adoption of group pens, numerous scientific studies corroborate that it is possible to obtain productivity and health at equal or even superior levels when compared to individual crates. Besides that, physical exercise during gestation improves performance during farrowing.



The companies that participated in the survey showed transition status according to Graph 4 below.

GRAPH 4

# PERCENTAGE OF SOWS HOUSED IN GROUP PENS BY COMPANY



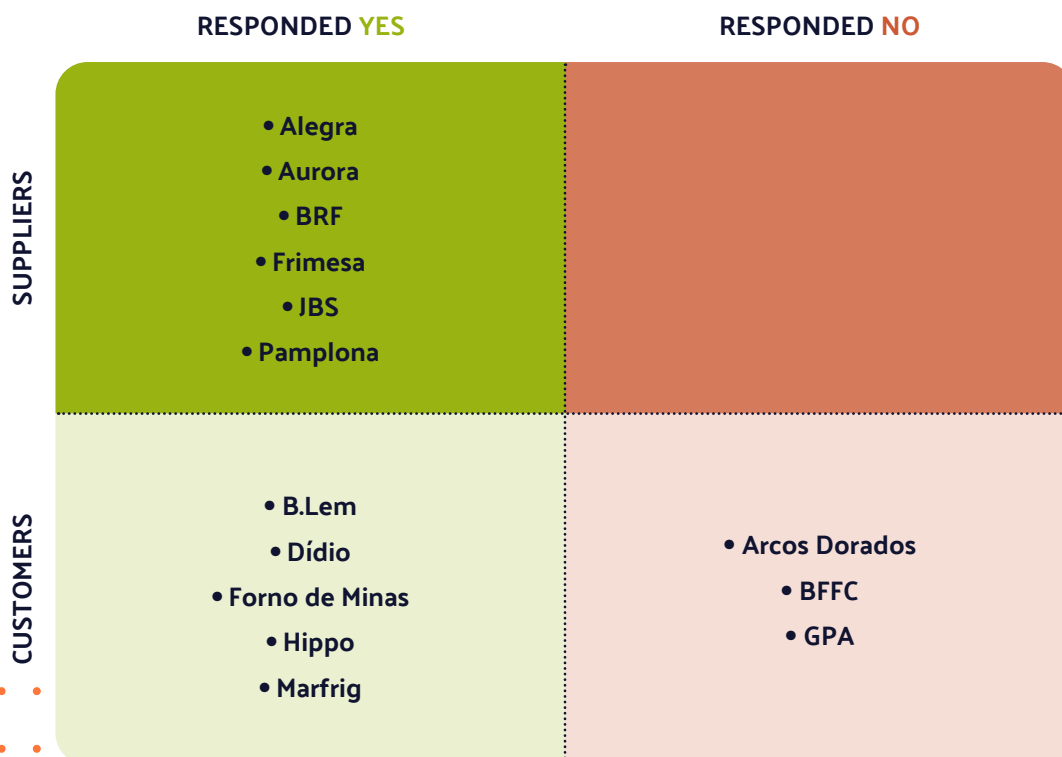
\*DATA FROM ONLY 84.48% OF THE COMPANY'S SUPPLIERS

An important aspect that was detected in the 2021 edition is that some companies in the customer group did not have information on the share of pork purchased from their suppliers from crate-free farms, which made it impossible to define the complete overview of respondent companies. This is an essential traceability issue that these companies need to demand from their suppliers, as they also have published a commitment to ban gestation crates from their supply chain. Likewise, it is necessary for suppliers to have control over their production and distribution, in order to provide this information to their customers.

As a result, this edition asked whether suppliers report the proportion of pork purchased by each customer that comes from farms that no longer use crates during gestation (Graph 5).

On the one hand, the scenario seems positive, since all companies in the supplier group responded that they provide information on the subject, while 37.5% of the companies in the customer group reported that their suppliers do not inform them about the subject. Despite representing the minority, the survey shows that this point deserves attention from suppliers and their traceability process.

GRAPH 5  
**DISTRIBUTION OF COMPANIES AS TO THE OFFER/RECEPTION OF INFORMATION ON THE PROPORTION OF PORK PURCHASED FROM CRATE-FREE FARMS**



## 5.1.1 Suppliers

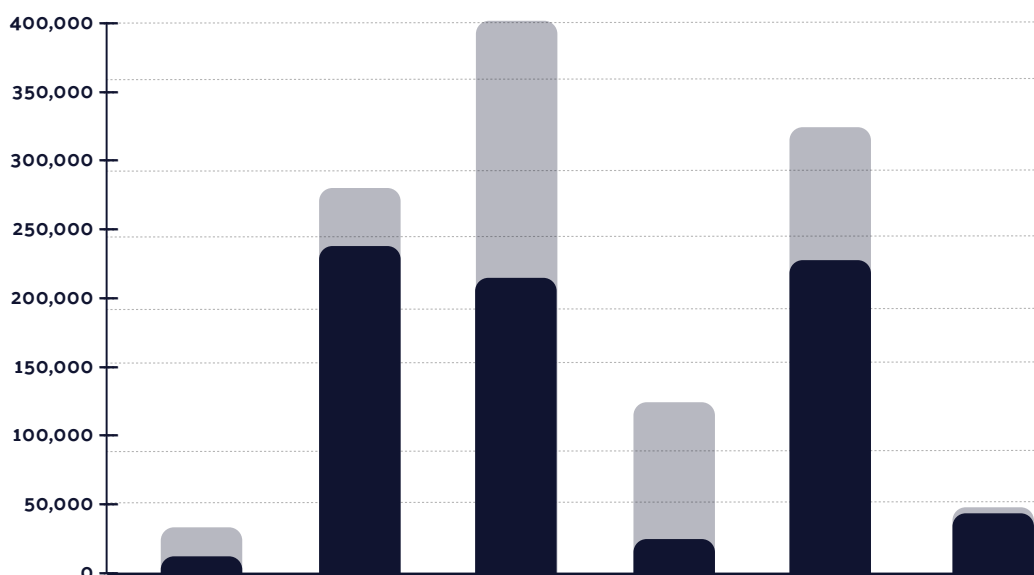
Companies from the supplier group were asked about the approximate total number of breeding sows and the number already housed in group pens during gestation. In this way, it was possible to have a more accurate view of the proportion of animals favored with the implementation in progress by each company, as shown in Graph 6.

Regarding the annual progress, there was a growth of at least three percentage points (Alegra), except for Frimesa, which reported a significant reduction in the number of sows housed in pens, a drop of 16 percentage points. The company did not provide any clarification or justification for this reduction. On the other hand, Aurora stood out with an increase of 25 percentage points (Graph 7).

It is essential to recognize these advances and encourage companies to keep the deadlines stipulated in their respective public commitments (between 2025 and 2029), despite the fact that NI 113 requires completion by 2045. Monitoring the transition of these largest pork producers shows that NI deadline is unnecessary and outdated in granting the extension of animal suffering.

GRAPH 6

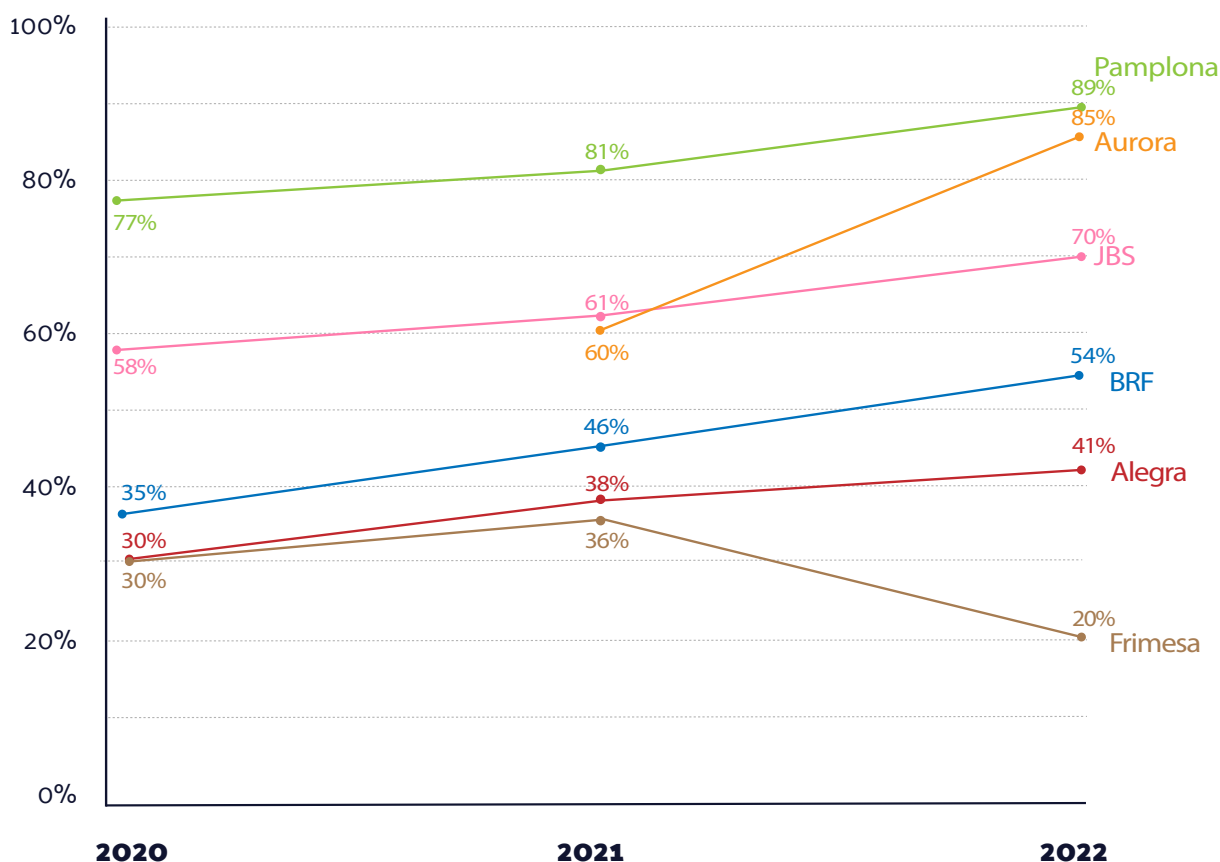
### PROPORTION OF SOWS HOUSED IN COLLECTIVE PENS OUT OF THE TOTAL PER COMPANY



COMPANY	ALEGRA	AURORA	BRF	FRIMESA	JBS	PAMPLONA
DEADLINE	2029	2026	2026	2026	2025	2026
TOTAL	32,190	280,000	400,000	125,000	324,000	49,729
IN PENS	13,358	238,000	215,000	25,000	226,800	44,259

GRÁPH 7

## PERCENTAGE OF SOWS HOUSED IN GROUP PENS ACCORDING TO COMPANY AND YEAR



Another important aspect that has been widely discussed is the period in which sows are kept in pens after insemination (coverage).

There are several scientific evidences that indicate that transferring the sows to group pens right after insemination (the “before embryo implantation” system) does not impair productivity, and may even promote improvements. It early establishes the group’s hierarchical framework (remaining more stable throughout gestation), which reduces the risk of embryonic reabsorption due to stress (lower estrus return and abortion rates). In this way, crates can be eliminated entirely during gestation, thus providing a longer period in more suitable housing for breeding sows.

Regarding this point, the survey questioned the period in gestation crates adopted by each company. As shown in Table 1, the majority (2/3) adopts the “before embryo implantation” system, even if not exclusively. However, the same proportion also adopts up to 35 days, and most of them do not intend to reduce this period. Of the justifications for not reducing the period of housing in individual pens after insemination,



- Alegra reported that “it is not a legal requirement and that its results with the ‘before embryo implantation’ system are worse”;
- Aurora, which last year replied that it intended to reduce the time in the crates, in this edition claimed that it will no longer do it, because “they will follow the requirements of NI 113”, which is incoherent, since the regulation recommends up to 35 days, and the company also houses up to 42 days;
- Frimesa, which in 2021 also adopted 42 days and replied that it intended to reduce the period, this year reported that it only adopts up to 35 days and that it has no goal of reducing it, since “the adjustments currently follow NI 113”;
- and JBS, which last year also housed up to 35 days, this year reported that it does not anymore, and that it still intends to reduce the period.

From these responses, it appears that NI 113 brings a comfortable permissiveness to the industry, instead of encouraging a shorter period of sows housed in individual pens.

TABLE 1

## PERIOD(S) ADOPTED FOR HOUSING SOWS IN INDIVIDUAL PENS PER COMPANY

Company	Up to 7 days ("before embryo implantation" system)	Up to 28 days	Up to 35 days	42 days	Intends to reduce?
Alegra	●		●		✗
Aurora			●	●	✗
BRF	●	●			✗
Frimesa			●		✗
JBS	●	●			✓
Pamplona	●		●		✓

LABELS:



YES



NO



## Challenges

To better understand the situation, the Pig Watch also asked whether companies experience difficulties to proceed with the transition to group housing. With the exception of JBS, all participants mentioned at least one difficulty, as shown in Graph 8. Financing was the most reported obstacle (67%), as in the two previous editions, indicating that it was not (only) a specific obstacle, but a chronic one in the production chain. The difficulty of acceptance by producers to carry out the transition was also reported by a company.



**Alegra Foods -  
Castrolanda**

**“Pig farming is going through a serious economic crisis. Many farms are closing. The main objective is to stay active.” - Alegra**



**Pamplona  
Alimentos S.A.**

**“Pig farming is going through a delicate moment in the market, limiting investments.” - Pamplona**



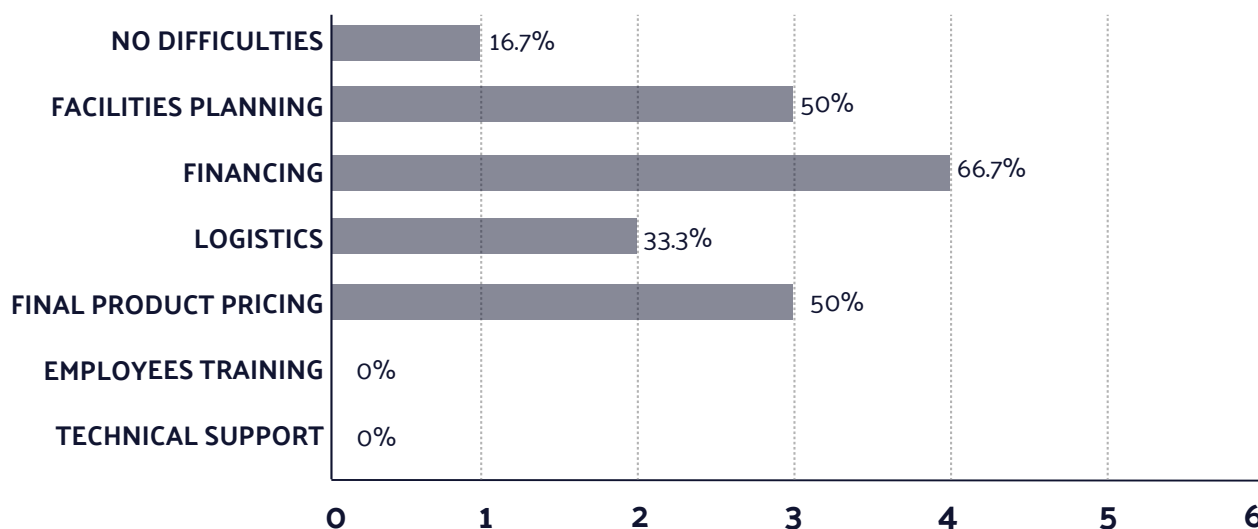
**BRF S.A. (Sadia  
and Perdigão)**

**“The post-pandemic period brought a series of challenges, mainly economic. The difficulty of financing, the values of interest and fees and the necessary inputs to carry out the adjustments have made structural migration difficult. In addition, the decrease in the purchasing power of the population, in general, harms the pass-through of price to the final product.” - BRF**

Due to the reported financial instability, there is a demand for government incentives, such as credit lines and subsidies, providing improvements in facilities in order to promote animal welfare conditions without harming zootechnical indices.

GRAPH 8

## DIFFICULTIES IDENTIFIED BY COMPANIES IN THE TRANSITION TO GROUP GESTATION



Specifically regarding the “before embryo implantation” system, all companies, except Pamplona, reported some obstacles.

**BRF** reported that there was a drop in zootechnical performance and more episodes of fights and aggression among sows.

**Alegria** stressed that this system does not require more manpower, but a more specialized and skilled workforce, as it requires more improved handling.

**JBS** reported that it is not having difficulties with new projects adopting the “before embryo implantation” system from the beginning. However, for conventional farms undergoing adaptation, there are challenges, such as the availability of physical space and the high cost of financing the renovations.

**Aurora** and **Frimesa** responded that they have no experience with the “before embryo implantation” system.

Apparently, more research in Brazil should be conducted to promote a better adaptation to the “before embryo implantation” system without harming the reproductive performance of sows. This issue should also be addressed to producers to demystify and encourage this handling.

## 5.1.2 Customers

For restaurants and retailers, the percentage of pork used that comes from suppliers that house sows in groups during gestation was asked. Analyzing Table 2, it is imperative for customer companies to seek information on the traceability of purchased products, in order to understand which current share of these comes from farms that have already banned gestation crates.

Among them, Dídio Pizza deserves to be highlighted for having reported that it has already completely banned gestation crates from its supply chain, even though it has set a deadline for 2026.

On the other hand, a worrying point concerns the commitment published by Arcos Dorados. When the pig welfare policy was announced in 2014, the text stated that the transition would take place by 2022. However, the company's latest public reports have not presented any deadline, and it reported in this edition that the new deadline will be 2026, but only as an internal target, that is, it has not yet been released. It is important to point out that, in order to be considered a public commitment, it must contain a date for completion. Otherwise the statement is just a letter of intent, without a proper mandate, which only misleads its customers, civil society, and does not promote a real impact on animals' lives .

Finally, in addition to publishing an animal welfare policy, a truly committed company is transparent about the execution process, which has not been fulfilled by some companies listed here, as they did not respond to the Pig Watch and did not present annual reports.



TABLE 2

## PERCENTAGE OF PORK FROM SUPPLIERS HOUSING SOWS IN GROUP PENS BY COMPANY AND YEAR

Company	Deadline	2020	2021	2022
Arcos Dorados (McDonald's)	2022	Non-respondent	Unknown by company	Unknown by company
B. Lem	2025	Did not participate	Did not participate	79%
Bloomin' Brands (Outback Steakhouse and Aussie Grill)	2025	Did not participate	Did not participate	Non-respondent
BFFC	2025	35%	55%	Unknown by company
Burger King	2025	Never responded		
Ciao	2025	Did not participate	Non-respondent	Non-respondent
Dídio	2026	Did not participate	Did not participate	100%
Forno de Minas	2025	Did not participate	Did not participate	20%
GPA	2028	Did not participate	Unknown by company	Unknown by company
Grupo Madero	2027	Did not participate	Did not participate	Non-respondent
Grupo Trigo	2025	Did not participate	Non-respondent	Non-respondent
Halipar	2025	Did not participate	Did not participate	Non-respondent
Hippo	2025	Did not participate	Did not participate	60%
Marfrig	2026	Did not participate	0.1%*	0.1%*
Subway	2025	Never responded		
UnidaSul	2025	Did not participate	Did not participate	Non-respondent

\*data from only 84.48% of the company's suppliers, from 2020

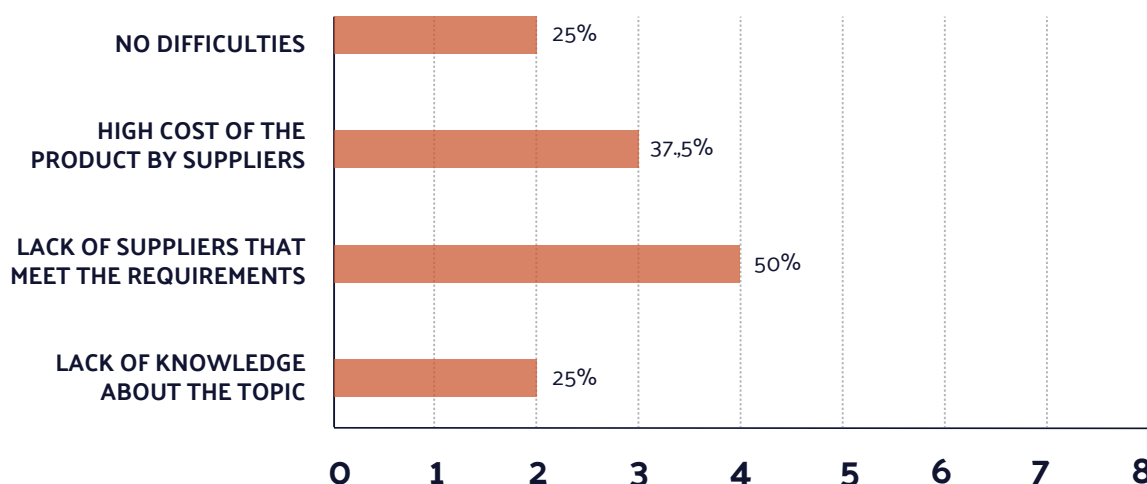
## Challenges

When asked about difficulties in the transition to group housing, only Dídio Pizza and GPA responded that they have not detected obstacles. The former because the migration has already been completed, and the latter because it is in the phase of supplier audits to diagnose the scenario, and then to be able to monitor the indicators and detect difficulties.

Companies' most mentioned bottleneck was the lack of suppliers that meet the requirements, with 50% of the responses (Graph 9).

GRAPH 9

### DIFFICULTIES IDENTIFIED BY COMPANIES IN THE TRANSITION TO GROUP GESTATION



In addition to the challenges listed above, some testimonials were obtained:



**“The main obstacle is the suppliers’ lack of knowledge to adapt to the requirements, either by understanding their ethical importance or their productive benefits” - Marfrig**



**Arcos Dorados  
(McDonald's)**

**“We face difficulties in the traceability of animals batches from farms free of gestation crates inside the slaughterhouses” - Arcos Dorados**



From what has been reported, there is a lack of mastery of the subject for clear and objective communication with current and potential suppliers, in order to ensure a growing supply of products that meet the requirements of their animal welfare policy. Participating in training, such as those offered free of charge by Alianima, can promote greater security to demand traceability of its purchased products, thus allowing better control and implementation of the company's own commitment.

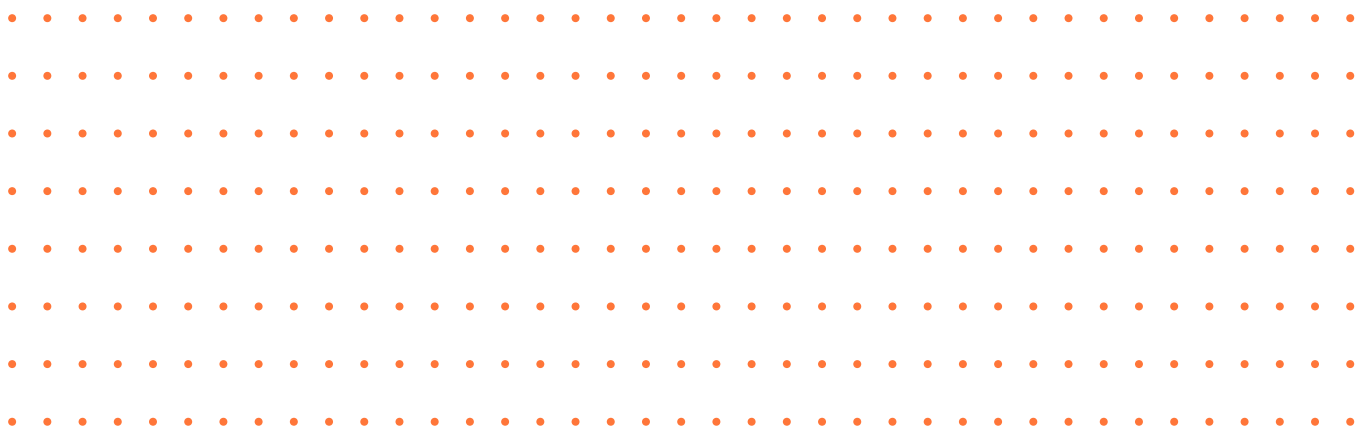
## 5.2 Piglet Handling

In addition to the issue of sow housing during gestation, this report also raised aspects related to piglets handling: surgical castration, tail docking, teeth clipping/grinding, and ear notching (ear clipping for individual identification). These are common procedures in pig farming, performed without any analgesic or anesthetic medication.

### 5.2.1 Suppliers

In the 2021 edition of the Pig Watch, all participating suppliers, which deal directly with pig farming, responded that they had already banned or intended to ban surgical castration without anesthesia, teeth clipping/grinding, and ear notching. Because of this, this year, it was asked whether companies have already banned these procedures and if they have not yet, what difficulties they are facing and if there is a deadline for completion (Table 3).

According to the results, only Alegra has not yet banned surgical castration without anesthesia, setting the NI 113 deadline for completion. "All finishing farms have already adopted immunocastration. The difficulty is the logistics in the full cycle farms, but we intend to implement it soon", said the company.





Regarding the teeth of piglets, it is more important to confirm that clipping is already prohibited by the NI 113, and that grinding is allowed only when necessary. Alegria reported that it has not yet banned the procedure and that it has not set a deadline for it, in order to avoid injuries to the sows' teats. Aurora pointed out that they do not recommend this handling as a routine practice on the farms, only in cases of extreme need, such as in cases of injuries to the sows and piglets, which compromises their welfare. Frimesa claimed the same concern with the banning of teeth grinding, and that it complies with NI 113.

In the case of ear notching, only BRF claimed to have already banned it, and Pamplona is the only one that will complete it before the 2030 deadline given by the NI 113. Attention should be given to JBS, which may have been mistaken in not establishing a deadline, as the NI 113 itself has already determined. Companies that have not yet banned the procedure reported difficulties in finding viable alternatives that ensure traceability.

TABLE 3  
**RESPONSE FROM EACH COMPANY ABOUT HAVING  
ALREADY BANNED PAINFUL PROCEDURES IN PIGLETS**

Company	PRACTICE TO BAN AND DEADLINE: <b>Castração cirúrgica sem anestesia</b>	PRACTICE TO BAN AND DEADLINE: <b>Teeth clipping/ grinding</b>	PRACTICE TO BAN AND DEADLINE: <b>Ear notching</b>
Alegria	✗ 2030	✗ no deadline	✗ 2030
Aurora	✓	✗ no deadline	✗ 2030
BRF	✓	✓	✓
Frimesa	✓	✗ no deadline	✗ 2030
JBS	✓	✓	✗ 2030
Pamplona	✓	✓	✗ 2026

Tail docking, on the other hand, remained a less promising procedure, with only 1/3 of the companies intend to banish it (Table 4), as well as in the 2021 edition. As justifications, the lack of viable alternatives, lack of knowledge on the subject, negative previous experience or unsuccessful attempt, and productive losses were listed (Graph 10).

TABLE 4  
**RESPONSE FROM EACH COMPANY  
ON THE INTENT TO BAN TAIL DOCKIN**

Company	PRACTICE TO BAN AND DEADLINE: Tail Docking
Alegra	✗
Aurora	✗
BRF	✗
Frimesa	✓
JBS	✓ no deadline
Pamplona	✗

**According to Alegra,** “we know that tail biting has multifactorial causes, and this makes it difficult to act successfully (...). Due to the different scenarios in each farm, today the most viable option is to keep the tail docking to minimize the occurrence of tail biting, which hurts the animals’ welfare much more than the piglets’ tail docking”.

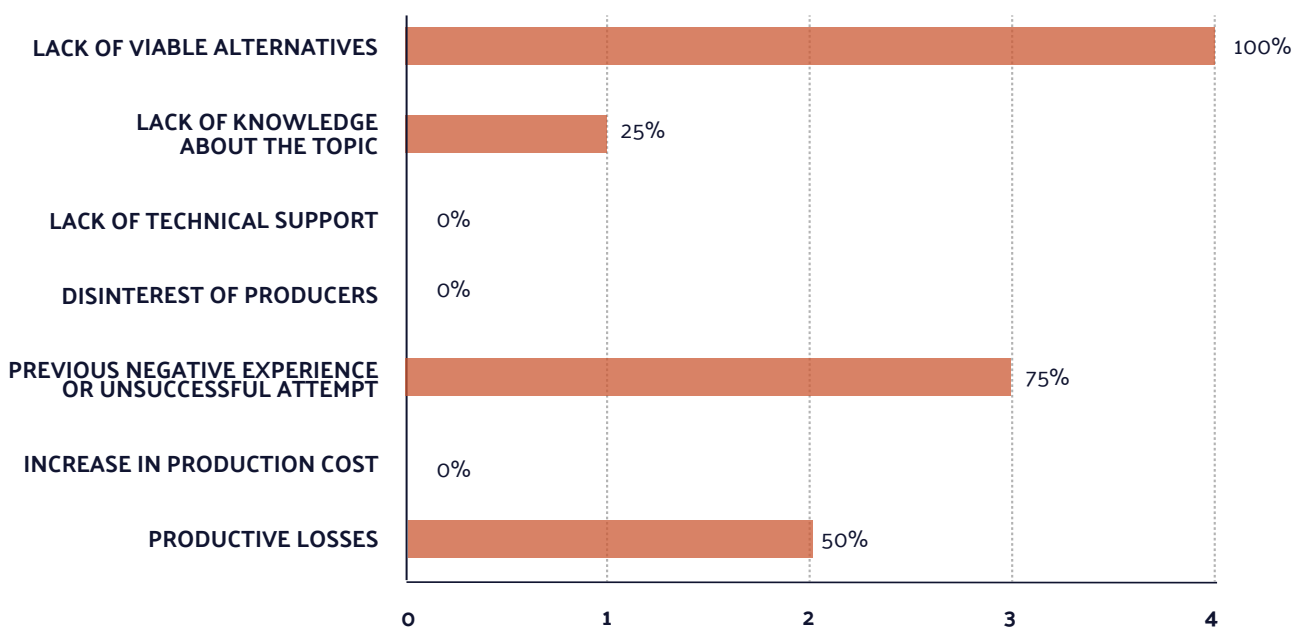


**BRF S.A. (Sadia and Perdigão)**

“Although we would like to stop tail docking, we understand that it is still necessary to maintain animals’ health. Tail biting is associated with multiple factors such as ambience, poor environments, and density. In previous experiences, even with these adequate factors, the results of not performing the procedure resulted in a high number of injured animals. Therefore, we work to ensure that the procedure is carried out in the best possible way, until three days of age, and until 2025 the use of analgesics will be implemented to perform the procedure.” - BRF

GRAPH 10

### REASONS WHY COMPANIES DO NOT WANT TO BAN TAIL DOCKING OF PIGLETS



**JBS Brasil (Seara)**

“The company has implemented the incentive to ban tail docking, has already found an alternative to mitigate potential tail biting, and that, despite the costs, there are still opportunities in the spheres of training and raising awareness among producers”. - JBS

Frimesa, which also stated that it will abolish this procedure, may have been wrong with the deadline establishment in accordance with NI 113. That is because it does not predict the tail docking ban, only that it should be avoided and if performed, only the final third should be mutilated, while minimizing pain and further complications.

## 5.2.2 Customers

More objectively, customer companies were only asked if they already require other animal welfare practices from their suppliers, such as mutilations in piglets (Table 5). Most respondents (75%) reported that they do not require any other item. Two companies worth mentioning are GPA, which requires, with a deadline until 2028, the end of all already discussed painful procedures in piglets, in addition to the use of beta-agonists, such as ractopamine; and Marfrig, which also requires, with a deadline until 2028, the use of environmental enrichment for pigs, which, in fact, is also required by NI 113.

**Ractopamine is an additive** supplied in pig feed at the end of fattening (finishing) to increase weight gain and reduce the proportion of fat. Despite the apparent advantage, there are numerous studies linking the use of ractopamine with metabolic disorders in animals, such as cardiovascular stress, in addition to behavioral changes. This substance is banned in more than 160 countries, including Russia, the European Union and China.

TABLE 5

### COMPANIES INTENTIONS TO DEMAND OTHER ANIMAL WELFARE PRACTICES FROM THEIR SUPPLIERS

Company	DEMANDED PRACTICE: Surgical castration with anesthesia or immunocastration	DEMANDED PRACTICE: End of teeth clipping/ grinding	DEMANDED PRACTICE: End of tail docking	DEMANDED PRACTICE: End of ear notching
Arcos Dorados	✗	✗	✗	✗
B.Lem	✗	✗	✗	✗
BFFC	✗	✗	✗	✗
Dídio	✗	✗	✗	✗
Forno de Minas	✗	✗	✗	✗
GPA	✓	✓	✓	✓
Hippo	✗	✗	✗	✗
Marfrig	✓	✓	✗	✓

Once the companies in the customer group understand the practices in pig farming and the adoption of other improvements in addition to the end of the gestation crates by their suppliers, it is extremely important that they similarly position themselves demanding the same improvements. This will not only reach the end customer more easily, but also suppliers who have not yet committed to an animal welfare policy.

### 5.3 Use of antimicrobials

The last topic addressed at the Pig Watch was the use of antimicrobials. For more than 50 years, intensive livestock farming has used these drugs not only for diseases treatment, but also for their prevention (prophylaxis) and as growth promoters.

**The prophylactic use** is carried out mainly in the moments of transition of the breeding stages, such as weaning, in which the piglets are taken from the farrowing and conducted to the nursery. These are situations that increase the risk of developing or spreading a pathogen, such as *E. coli* bacteria, due to the stress of handling and mixing animals.

**Growth promoters**, on the other hand, are adopted at low doses for short periods of time in animal feed, with the objective of improving cost-effectiveness in maintaining animal health and nutritional efficiency.

**However, both practices are imprudent**, especially growth promoters, as they catalyze the emergence of pathogens resistant to antimicrobials, that is, these drugs become obsolete, disarming us against several diseases. In addition, about 70% of these drugs are also used to treat diseases in humans, which makes the issue a One Health calamity. In 2019 alone, around 1.2 million people died worldwide from diseases caused by superbugs, and the trend is for a progressive increase while there are no significant changes in the use of these drugs.

### 5.3.1 Suppliers

When comparing this year’s responses with those of 2021, there is a significant evolution in this topic (Table 6). BRF takes the lead, having already banned both non-therapeutic uses of antimicrobials, whereas last year it only intended to end their use as growth promoters, and without a deadline for completion. Frimesa, JBS and Pamplona also stated that they no longer use growth promoters.

On the other hand, Aurora seems to have faced difficulties in doing so, since in 2021 it had reported that it intended to ban growth promoters, but this year it replied that it no longer intends to. Among the reasons for this withdrawal, they listed the lack of viable alternatives, increase in production costs, and productive losses.

Of the companies that reported that they did not intend to ban prophylactic use, productive losses, increased production costs, health insecurity, and previous negative or unsuccessful experience were listed as main reasons.

TABLE 6

### INTENTION OF EACH COMPANY TO BAN THE NON-THERAPEUTIC USE OF ANTIMICROBIALS

Company	Growth Promoters	Prophylaxis
Alegra	Intends to ban, no deadline	Intends to ban, no deadline
Aurora	Does not intend to ban	Does not intend to ban
BRF	Already banned	Already banned
Frimesa	Already banned	Intends to ban, no deadline
JBS	Already banned	Does not intend to ban
Pamplona	Already banned	Does not intend to ban





## 5.3.2 Customers

Of the eight companies that responded, two declared that they require or intend to require that their suppliers stop using antimicrobials for non-therapeutic purposes (Table 7). Despite indicating an understanding of the problem by companies that do not have direct contact with pig farming, there was no evolution when compared to last year's results. Customer corporations, whether restaurants or retailers, must be aware of their purchasing power and play their role, both in encouraging their suppliers by demonstrating market demand with these new requirements, and in clarifying these concepts to their consumers.

TABLE 7

### INTENTION OF EACH COMPANY TO REQUIRE THE END OF NON-THERAPEUTIC USE OF ANTIMICROBIALS FROM ITS SUPPLIERS

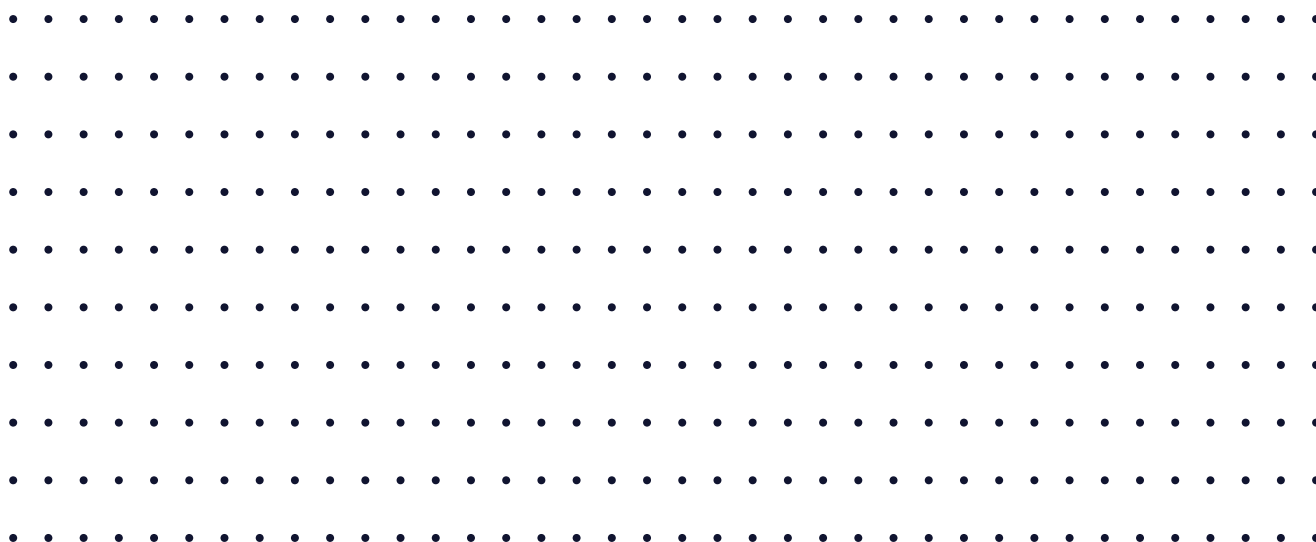
Company	Demand an end to non-therapeutic use of antimicrobials and Deadline
Arco Dorados	 2026
B. Lem	
BFFC	
Dídio	
Forno de Minas	
GPA	 2028
Hippo	
Marfrig	

## 6. Conclusions

In this third edition of the Pig Watch, a high level of participation by suppliers was maintained, demonstrating seriousness and commitment to transparency in the process of implementing each company's animal welfare policy.

Among the customer group, it is positive that more companies have announced a gestation crate-free commitment in the last year, and that twice as many have responded to the questionnaire compared to 2021. However, there is a continuous lack of transparency of some companies that year after year do not communicate their progress, and whose deadlines for completion are relatively close to the end. In addition, there is still a strong reinforcement of the determination of their status with that of their suppliers, which to a certain extent is justifiable because there is a dependence on the implementation of improvements by those who deal directly with the animals. However, as commitments (and responsibility) are not limited to suppliers, it is essential that customer companies also obtain information on how much of their purchased portion of pork comes from farms that have adopted group gestation housing. This aspect is a both-parties responsibility, since suppliers must also dedicate themselves and improve their traceability protocols, in order to provide this detailed information to their customers.

Another aspect that remains are the financial obstacles that limit the proposed advances. It is important to have incentives, such as credit lines and subsidies, to allow and encourage the implementation of improvements in pig farming. Financial institutions must pay attention to these transformations in the sector, as Brazilian customers and the foreign market are progressively more demanding, not only regarding the environment, but also regarding the way in which animals are treated.



Regarding the non-therapeutic use of antimicrobials, a significant improvement can be seen according to the responses of the suppliers, mainly as growth promoters. It is still crucial for One Health that effective alternatives are developed and implemented to further reduce the use of these drugs, so that they are limited only to the treatment of diagnosed diseases (therapeutic use), not only in pig farming, but in all animal production.

The last point is the need for companies to understand that sustainability and animal welfare policies are commitments to civil society in constant renewal and improvement. The more corporations engage in advances, the lower the economic and operational impacts, which also makes it possible to gradually include other points of improvement, such as maternity, transportation, and slaughter.

**Alianima thanks the responding companies for their participation, not only for providing a consistent study on the current scenario of pig farming with regard to animal welfare, but also for the transparency of its sustainability commitments with consumers and civil society.**



## 7. Contact

Be part of this great movement for the animals!

If your company wants to know more about our work or needs more specific explanation on animal welfare, please contact us through the channels below:



Scan the QR Code to know more.

Access:  
**ALI**  
**ANI**  
**MA**

Access:  
 **OBSERVATÓRIO**  
**ANIMAL**



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### **Audiovisual resources references :**

<https://animainternational.org/>

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/essereanimali/>

<https://weanimalsmedia.org/>



## REALIZATION

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