

# PIG ENRICHMENT OVERVIEW

Pasado's Safe Haven Pig Enrichment Program is designed to provide a more varied experience for our Sanctuary residents, making their stay more comfortable and enjoyable. Interacting with pigs in activities that they enjoy can make them happier, less anxious, and more adoptable!

We have put together this binder so volunteers can easily find things to do with our pigs, and to identify specific activities that are particularly beneficial for each pig, otherwise known as *targeted enrichment*. Pasado's staff will maintain this binder weekly, adding sheets for new pigs, and editing if some of the activities are inappropriate for that particular pig. The appropriateness of certain activities for pigs can vary due to changes in diet, health or behavior.

Always ask a staff member prior to beginning any enrichment activity. Read the volunteer board before interacting with any of the pigs, as their behavior/needs change regularly. Review the activities on the enrichment sheet before working with a pig. Upon completion of your session, **please be sure to write down what you worked on with the pig, and leave comments so we can monitor the progress and see what works well for each pig.**

Below are descriptions of the activities you will find in this binder (check each area's sheet to be sure that these activities are listed, not all activities will be appropriate for all pigs). If you have any ideas of other activities we could add, please contact [Ashleyw@pasadosafehaven.org](mailto:Ashleyw@pasadosafehaven.org) with your suggestions.

- **Foraging Enrichment:** Volunteers can cut produce to appropriate sizes using the guide in the Enrichment Room and can take them to pig yards and spread them out for pigs to forage and eat. Treats can also be hidden under logs and behind rocks for the pigs to seek out. Volunteers can disperse the produce in the potbelly yards alone, but will need to be accompanied by a caregiver in the large pig yards.
- **Frozen Treats:** In warmer months, frozen snacks are not only healthy, but also help keep our pigs cool. Produce can be chopped and placed with water into ice trays or other various plastic containers. Place completed trays/containers into the enrichment room freezer until frozen and then disperse.
- **Hanging Treats:** Produce, such as melons, can be hung from fences or tree branches, this increases the amount of work it takes for the pig to obtain the treat, making it a fun and challenging snack!
- **Treat Dispensers:** There are several different types of treat dispensers that can be used for the pigs. This activity is most appropriate for the potbellies, as the larger pigs can easily destroy or consume the dispensers. Each treat holder requires different sizes of produce/treats (ask a caregiver if you need help choosing what works best). There will need to be **one dispenser per pig** to ensure that there are no fights over food.
  - Example of a treat dispenser - PVC pipe with holes drilled in it and caps on either end can be filled with treats. As the pig rolls it around, treats will drop out.

- **Fire Hose Toys:** We have several fire hose toys that make excellent treat dispensers for pigs! Treats can be stuffed in the folds of the hose, making the pig push the hose around to obtain the snack. These work great for the large pigs.
- **Ball toys** - Pig often enjoy pushing soccer balls around with their noses or carrying “Jolly Balls” around in their mouths.
- **Hay Boxes:** Pigs love to create a nest with their hay and forage for nesting material. Hay boxes (made from metal hay containers or pallets) can be filled with fresh hay and placed in the pig’s stall. The pig can then pull hay through the holes of the container and place it in their nest.
- **Rooting/Sand boxes:** Pigs love to root around. We have pools for each yard that can be filled with different materials for the pigs to root in. River rocks, sand, and/or cardboard can be used. Produce can be hidden under these items for the pigs to try to find.
- **Shredded Paper:** A cardboard box filled with newspaper is a fun enrichment activity for a pig. They enjoy shredding the paper and sifting through it with their noses. We often have the materials for this around the sanctuary, but volunteers are also welcome to bring supplies from home.
- **Ball Pit:** We have a large bag of multi-colored plastic balls, located in the enrichment room. They can be used with a pool to make a small ball pit. Volunteers can cut up small bits of produce, mix them in with the balls, and let the pigs root around for them. After use, the balls should be sanitized and put away.
- **Mud Wallows/Pools:** In warmer months, pigs love to have access to mud or pools to cool down in. Most yards have either of these set up. Let a caregiver know you will be filling a pool/wallow so that we can plan accordingly.
- **Sprinklers:** Some pigs may enjoy a sprinkler on a hot day. Sprinklers can be found in the enrichment room and set up using any hose. Be sure to check with a caregiver before setting one up!
- **Mirrors:** Some pigs enjoy looking at themselves in mirrors! Mirrors made from special no-break material will need to be picked up from the enrichment room and should be put away when you are done.
- **Scent:** Pigs are very driven by scent. We have many different essential oils that can be applied to various objects including paper and cardboard boxes for the pigs . They enjoy smelling different scents and figuring out which ones they like. Make sure to mark down what is liked/disliked for the caregivers to keep track of.

- **Sound:** Many pigs enjoy listening to music. Volunteers can bring radios to pig yards (if there is an outlet to connect to) or use cell phones to play music or audio books for the pigs.
- **Visual:** Some pigs have been known to enjoy watching TV or Movies. Using a phone or tablet, volunteers can play a TV show or movie for the pigs to watch.
- **Harness Training:** Something for more experienced volunteers. Some of our pigs enjoy being put on a harness to be taken on walks in the sanctuary. Some of them need a little more help in this area. Volunteers can start by taking the harness in the area and letting the pig smell/feel it. After this they can practice harnessing and walking the pig around the yard a few times. Once the volunteer and pig are comfortable, walks can be taken. Make sure to radio before you leave the yard since dogs are being walked through the sanctuary throughout the day.
- **Trick Training:** Pigs are extremely intelligent and can be trained to do tricks, similar to how you would train a dog. Trick training can be done using small treat rewards when the desired behavior is performed. Treats should **never** be given by hand, but should be placed on the ground instead. Training should be done with one pig at a time as to not create competition over rewards. Common tricks include: come, sit, up (stand up on hind legs), spin, “find it”, or navigating obstacle courses.
- **Quiet Time/ Socializing:** Some pigs enjoy just hanging out with their human companions. If the pig is more shy, this may include just sitting near by quietly. For others this may involve snuggling, belly rubs, or just talking to the pig.
- **Brushing/Groom:** Most pigs enjoy being brushed. All pig brushes can be found in the enrichment room. Once done with the brush, it will need to be cleaned and sanitized with dilute Rescue before being put back or used on another pig.