

## How wild are domestic pigs?

**The "SchweinErleben" project is a research and educational programme run by the Albert Koechlin Foundation in collaboration with the Research Institute of Organic Agriculture FiBL and the Natur-Museum Luzern. As part of this project, interested people are invited to observe pigs in the outdoor enclosure at the Panoramahof farm in Meggen (canton of Lucerne) using video recordings. This citizen science approach supports FiBL in answering scientific questions.**

(Frick, 19.03.2024) As part of "SchweinErleben", three sows - and, depending on the season, their piglets - can be observed in a temporary outdoor enclosure at the Panoramahof in Meggen since spring 2023. With this project, the Albert Koechlin Foundation (AKS) is drawing attention to an animal that we use but hardly know. "With this natural and educational project, we can familiarise children, young people and adults with pigs," says Marianne Schnarwiler, Managing Director of the AKS.

### Unique approach

In addition to specific educational programmes for school classes, "SchweinErleben" also includes a research section, for which the AKS is collaborating with FiBL. "The project gives both the public and researchers unique access to pigs," says Mirjam Holinger, Co-leader of the Animal Housing and Livestock Breeding Group at FiBL. "In order to study the behaviour and possible needs of animals, it is often useful to observe these animals in their natural environment. Domestic pigs are descended from wild boar - and so forests and, to a lesser extent, meadows are considered to be the original environment of pigs." The findings can be used to design husbandry systems that are more species-appropriate and better tailored to the pigs' needs.

### Scientists sought

During the project period, the pigs on the panoramic farm are observed with over 20 video cameras. Is there still a wild boar with all its behaviour and needs behind the pink skin of the domestic pigs? To find out, researchers from the general public are now being asked to watch short videos of the curious animals online - and then answer a few research questions. Interested people can participate immediately on the [Citizen Science Zurich website](#). By taking part, they help to gather information about the behaviour and social structure of pigs and find answers to scientific questions that have yet to be answered. Various surprises await the most diligent Citizen Science participants, such as exclusive guided tours of "SchweinErleben" on site.

## Contacts

- Mirjam Holinger, Co-leader of the Group Animal Housing & Livestock Breeding, FiBL Switzerland  
Tel +41 62 865 72 24, e-mail [mirjam.holinger@fibl.org](mailto:mirjam.holinger@fibl.org)
- Marianne Schnarwiler, Managing Director AKS  
Tel +41 226 41 20, e-mail [marianne.schnarwiler@aks-stiftung.ch](mailto:marianne.schnarwiler@aks-stiftung.ch)

## Partners

- Albert Koechlin Foundation
- Natur-Museum Luzern

## Links

- Participation on Citizen Science Zurich: <https://lab.citizenscience.ch/en/project/754>
- Project website "SchweinErleben": [schweinerleben.ch](http://schweinerleben.ch)

## Images for download

Images are available under the following link:

<https://biomediamedia.picturepark.com/s/O18HiwKy>

### About FiBL

The Research Institute of Organic Agriculture FiBL is one of the world's leading research institutions in the field of organic agriculture. FiBL's strengths are interdisciplinary research, joint innovations with farmers and the food industry as well as rapid knowledge transfer. The FiBL Group currently includes FiBL Switzerland (founded in 1973), FiBL Germany (2001), FiBL Austria (2004), ÖMKi (Hungarian Research Institute of Organic Agriculture, 2011), FiBL France (2017) and FiBL Europe (2017), which is jointly supported by the five national institutes. Around 400 employees work at the various locations.

[www.fibl.org](http://www.fibl.org)

### **About AKS**

The Albert Koechlin Foundation is a charitable private foundation established by the heirs of the entrepreneur Rudolf Albert Koechlin (1859 - 1927). It is active in Central Switzerland - in the cantons of Uri, Schwyz, Obwalden, Nidwalden and Lucerne. Its activities support projects in the areas of social welfare, education, culture, business and the environment. Among other things, the Albert Koechlin Foundation stands for a living cultural landscape, our living space and the promotion of family and education.

[www.aks-stiftung.ch](http://www.aks-stiftung.ch)