

World's largest pork producer to market hogs for pig-human organ transplants

Smithfield Foods, the world's largest pork producer, has established a separate bioscience unit to expand its role in supplying pig parts for medical uses, with the ultimate goal of selling pig organs for transplantation into humans.

Routine pig-human organ transplants are years away, but recent scientific advances are breaking down barriers that frustrated prior attempts to use pigs as a ready supply of replacement parts for sick or injured people, making it an attractive new market.

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"We want to signal to the medical device and science communities that this is an area we're focused on – that we're not strictly packers," said [Courtney Stanton, vice president of Smithfield's new bioscience unit].

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Transplants are used for people diagnosed with organ failure and who have no other treatment options...[Smithfield] owns more than 51 percent of its farms and hopes to sell directly to researchers and health-care companies, which now typically buy from third parties.

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George Church, a Harvard Medical School genetics professor and researcher, welcomes the involvement of a big pork producer. "Even though we've got companies like eGenesis that would make the first pigs, you still need someone who will breed them and do it to scale," he said.

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion, and analysis. Read full, original post: [Smithfield makes move on market for pig-human transplants](#)

For more background on the Genetic Literacy Project, read [GLP on Wikipedia](#)