



Farm Action



Farm Action Fund

PROPOSITION 12:

Myths vs. Facts

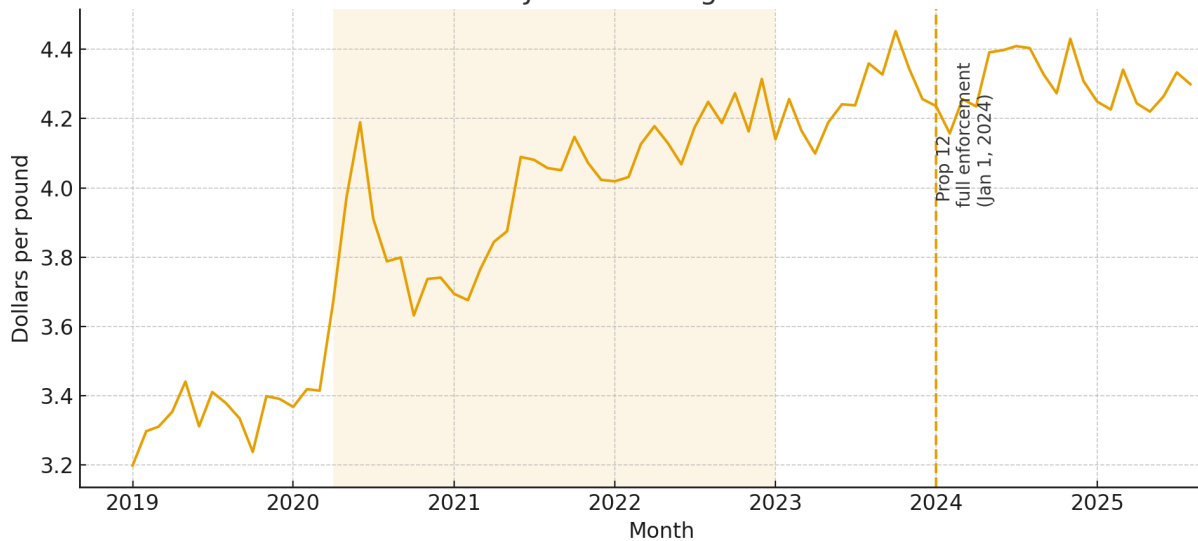
Passed overwhelmingly by voters, California’s Proposition 12 sets basic animal welfare standards by prohibiting the use of gestation crates and creates premium market opportunities for independent farmers. However, in an attempt to overturn this law, corporate pork industry lobbyists like the National Pork Producers Council (NPPC) are spreading misinformation to Congress and the public. Here are the facts:

MYTH: Prop 12 caused a 41% surge in pork prices.

FACT: Since Prop 12 took effect in January 2024, retail pork chop prices have moved just 6.6% across the year—a normal short-term adjustment.

The 41% increase happened years before Prop 12 took effect, and was a market correction driven by unsustainably low 2019 hog prices and COVID disruptions.

U.S. Average Retail Price: All Pork Chops (BLS APU0000FD3101)
Jan 2019–Aug 2025



MYTH: Prop 12 is a food security risk disrupting supply chains.

FACT: There is no evidence of systemic shortages of pork due to Prop 12.

At least 27% of U.S. pork producers are already Prop 12-compliant, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s own analysis confirms that pork products remain on store shelves in California. Rather, the industrial model pushed by NPPC poses a supply chain risk by concentrating production, reducing resilience, and driving small farms out of business.

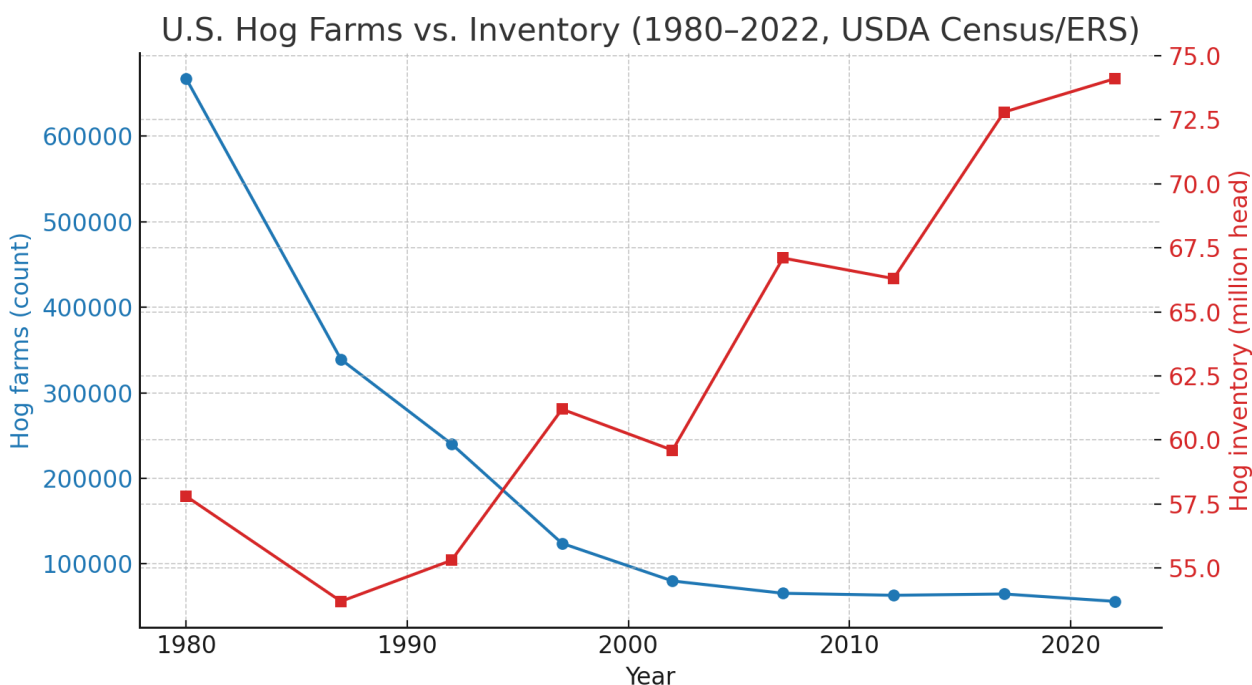
MYTH:

Prop 12 caused the loss of more than 5,000 U.S. hog farms from 2017 to 2022.

FACT:

This decline occurred before Prop 12 was implemented in 2024.

The decline is part of a decades-long consolidation trend: Between 1980 and 2022, the number of hog operations shrank by more than 70% even as total production rose. This loss has been accelerated by the very policies NPPC champions—unchecked vertical integration, weak enforcement of the Packers & Stockyards Act, and opposition to antitrust reforms. Prop 12 isn't the problem; it creates a fair market where independent farmers can compete.

**MYTH:**

Prop 12 endangers animal welfare because sows will crush their piglets if they are not confined in crates.

FACT:

Prop 12 applies only to gestation crates—the cages used to confine pregnant sows for nearly four months at a time—not farrowing crates, which are used when sows give birth and nurse piglets.

Contact Caroline Nodus at cnodus@farmactionfund.us for more information.



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