



Animal Caretaker/Operations Manager

An Animal Caretaker/Operations Manager oversees a production facility or facilities where animals are raised for food consumption.



Inspiring Minds to Grow


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career profile


*Name: Andrew Corbin
Job Title: Animal Caretaker/
Operations Manager*

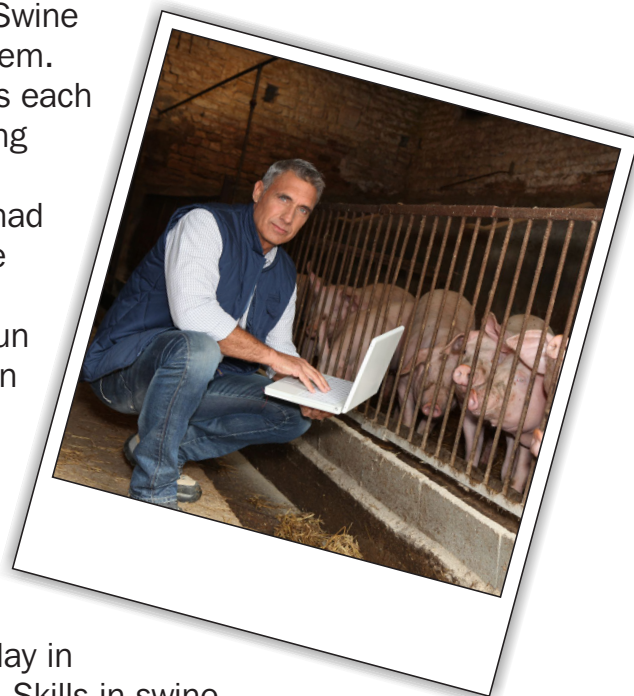
Employer: Summit Swine Systems

*Education: AS, Parkland Community College: Champaign, Illinois;
BS, University of Illinois: Champaign-Urbana*

 I am the operations manager with Summit Swine Systems, a farrow-to-market hog production system. Our farrowing unit produces about 40,000 piglets each year. Many of these are fed out in our own feeding unit, but some are sold to other producers. Interestingly, I didn't grow up on a farm, but we had a few acres. When I enrolled in agriscience in the ninth grade, the teacher talked about supervised experience and raising a pig. That sounded like fun to me. I got one 40-pound feeder pig and fed it in a pen and shelter that I constructed. I took the pig to the county fair when it weighed 260 pounds. My pig won a red ribbon in the show!

 I oversee a small staff of unit managers and technicians on a daily basis. Management skills are very important. I use these skills each day in dealing with unit managers and other individuals. Skills in swine production are also important. Sometimes I instruct unit managers and others in what they need to do to have a top-notch swine facility. Each day I observe each unit and assess how well they are doing. I often have unit managers make adjustments in the procedures that are followed.

 My first job was as a technician working in the farrowing barn. I worked hard to ensure all went well and that we had good livability of newborn pigs. After a couple of years, the unit manager retired, and I got his job. Soon, the opportunity to become operations manager arose, and I indicated to the facility owner that I was interested. The owner asked me to share my management philosophy and how this could be used to further profitability. I got the job and have had it for five years. As I look back, being an operations manager is like being the captain of a team. We all work together to do what needs to be done.



Animal Caretaker/ Operations Manager

overview



An **animal caretaker/operations manager** oversees other individuals and is directly involved in caring for animals to ensure well-being and efficiency of production.

suggested high school courses



agriscience, biology, animal science, accounting, mathematics, computer applications, and communications

experience needed



Practical experience working in a swine production facility is essential to becoming an operations manager.

degree(s) required



An AS degree in agribusiness with a minor in animal/swine science is needed. A BS degree in swine science or a related area is highly desirable.

potential employers



swine farms; institutional swine research facilities; swine feed, equipment, and other supplies companies

salary range



\$33,000 to \$65,000

employment outlook and trends



The future outlook for animal caretakers/operation managers is expected to be **fair** over the next five years.

professional organizations



American Association of Swine Veterinarians (AASV) www.aasv.org/

American Society of Animal Science (ASAS) www.asas.org/

National Institute of Animal Agriculture www.animalagriculture.org/



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