

Peculiar Pig Farm, LLC

Orangeburg and Columbia Area SBDC Client
peculiarpigfarm.com



High on the Hog

Marvin Ross is not your average entrepreneur; as indicated by the business name, Peculiar Pig Farm, he works in a unique industry, supplying butcher shops and restaurants with whole hogs.

Ross's story unfolds against the backdrop of his grandfather's farm, a place teeming with a menagerie of animals and a rich harvest of corn, soybeans, cotton, and vegetables. Growing up amidst this bounty instilled in him a profound appreciation for agriculture. In 2017, continuing his family legacy, he established Peculiar Pig Farm, specializing in hog farming, but he also raises cows, ducks, chickens, and goats.

RESULTS:

- New Business Started
- Business Pivot and Expansion
- Capital Obtained: \$515,000
- 2023 Annual Sales Increase: 100%
- Annual Sales Increase Since 2020: 362%
- Jobs Created: 5 full-time; 3 part-time

In 2020, while other businesses struggled amid the pandemic, Ross's enterprise flourished as direct-to-consumer demand surged. A year later, with people returning to grocery stores, Ross adapted by adding more butcher shops to his customer base. During this period, the catering arm of his business, Peculiar Pig Eats, also emerged.

Guided by referrals, Ross contacted the SC SBDC in 2022 for assistance with securing a USDA Value-Added Producer Grant (VAPG). The arduous SAM registration process proved challenging, but with the support of SC SBDC consultants Brian Wheat and Jim Johnson, Ross gained actionable insights.

Guided by Wheat and Johnson, Ross secured \$265,000 in grant money—\$250,000 from the VAPG grant in October 2022 and an additional \$15,000 in July 2023 through the SC Department of Agriculture's ACRE grant competition.

Empowered by this financial boost, Peculiar Pig Farm expanded its footprint beyond Charleston, venturing into Nashville, Charlotte, Greenville and St. Augustine. Ross envisions further growth, aiming to extend operations to Atlanta and secure shelf space in grocery stores.

Managing the care of 120 hogs requires many hands, so Ross is fortunate to have six family members assisting him with every aspect of the operation, including Peculiar Pig Eats, which has significantly grown the past year by offering the “whole hog” experience for events ranging from 30 to 500 people. Ross hopes that with Johnson's support, he can continue this growth spurt.

Looking ahead 2-4 years, Ross aims to streamline his operation by doing his own processing. Passionate about eco-friendly and sustainable farming, Ross hopes to one day incorporate solar power and biofuels into his practices. As his business expands, Ross plans to hire an additional 20-30 employees.

“Marvin has a lot of great ideas,” said Johnson, “and my objective is to help him approach them systemically, increasing the chances of him achieving his goals.”

Ross's collaboration with the SC SBDC has yielded more than grants; it has helped him pursue marketing opportunities, diversify his business, and lay the foundation for a lasting legacy. As a steadfast guide, Johnson, assists Ross in implementing inventive ideas and safeguarding the authenticity of Peculiar Pig Farm as a genuine farm-to-table entity that actively champions local farmers and communities.

Services Provided:

- > Loan Application Processing
- > Budgeting
- > Business Expansion
- > Marketing Plan
- > Financial Projections

“*I've been impressed by Jim and his commitment to my success. Any time I have a question, I just send an email. He always answers. I'm glad to have him in my corner.*”

Marvin Ross, Owner, Peculiar Pig Farm and Peculiar Pig Eats

