

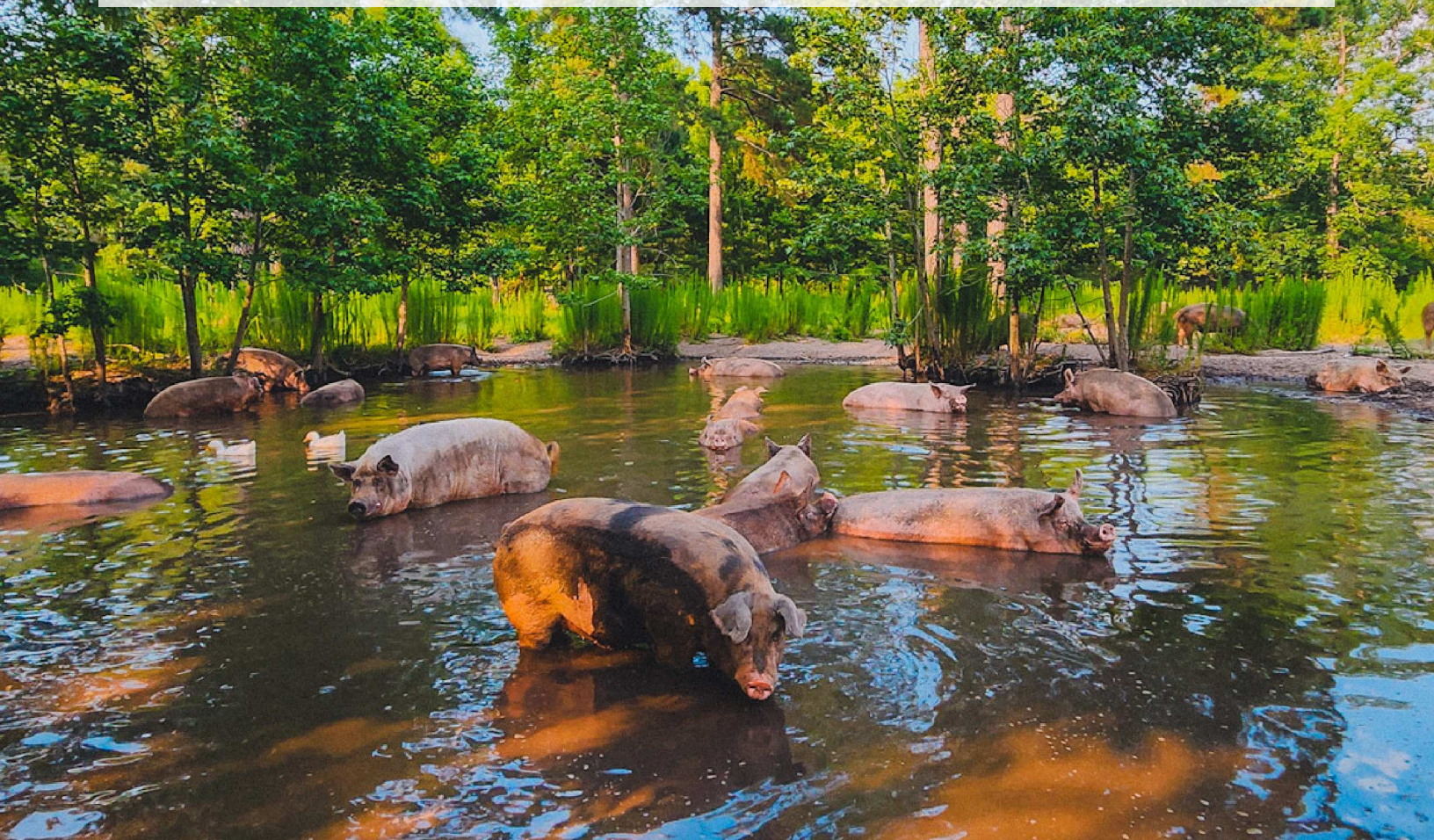


Sisu Refuge 2024

Impact Report 

WHAT EXACTLY IS SISU?

"Sisu is extraordinary boldness, and resoluteness in the face of extreme adversity. An action mindset which enables individuals to see past their present limitations and into what might be. Sisu begins where perseverance and grit end. It is the second wing of mental toughness, after the individual has reached the limits of their observed mental or physical capacities. Sisu is the ultimate determination, fortitude, and persistence; an almost magical quality, a combination of stamina and courage held in reserve for hard times. It is taking action against the odds."



About Sisu Refuge



Sisu Refuge is a sanctuary for over 200 sentient beings, primarily rescued pigs from commercial farming operations. Each resident has a remarkable story of survival, and we use compelling storytelling to share their journeys with the world. By showcasing their personalities and experiences, we empower these animals to advocate for themselves and inspire empathy.

Located on a stunning 47+ acre property in Duplin County, North Carolina—the most intensively factory-farmed region on the planet—Sisu Refuge stands as a beacon of hope. This county is home to the world’s largest pig slaughterhouse, killing over 33,000 animals daily. Despite pigs outnumbering humans 29:1 in the region, they remain hidden from public view, confined within Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs). At Sisu Refuge, however, these animals live freely and safely, surrounded by compassion and care.

Our mission is twofold: to provide an exceptional quality of life for each animal in our care and to inspire people to make choices that reduce harm and suffering—for animals, for others, and for our planet. Farmed animals are the most abused and exploited beings on Earth. At Sisu Refuge, we prioritize rescuing those who need us most while championing their inherent right to live free from harm.



Mission, Vision, Values



Mission and Values:

Our mission is to provide the highest quality of life for every individual in our care while inspiring others to make compassionate choices that reduce harm and suffering—for animals, humans, and the planet.

We hope to inspire compassion and help people think about small changes they can make to reduce animal suffering. By sharing their stories, we aim to inspire kindness and empathy. Through public engagement, we facilitate the connections necessary to drive meaningful change. Our mission tenets are also our signature S.O.A.R. programs.

- **SANCTUARY:** Providing sustainable, lifelong sanctuary for all of our residents is our highest priority.
- **OUTREACH:** We strive to raise awareness about the exploitation of both human and non-human animals in commercial farming. Our goal is to inspire compassion by encouraging people to disengage from these industries.
- **ADVOCACY:** As farmed animals endure unparalleled abuse, we champion a plant-based diet and cruelty-free lifestyle that rejects all forms of animal use.
- **RESCUE:** We collaborate with local authorities and animal shelters to rescue and ensure the safe placement of large-breed pigs and other farmed animals. We also respond to hoarding and criminal cruelty cases whenever possible. In North Carolina, we respond to 100% of calls for pigs who have fallen or jumped from transport trucks.



What's Next for Sisu?



Looking Ahead: A Vision for 2025

2024 brought unexpected challenges, including a steep decline in donations. But even in the face of these obstacles, we've been inspired by the resilience of our animals and the generosity of those who continue to believe in our mission. These challenges have sharpened our focus and reaffirmed our commitment to creating lasting change.

At Sisu Refuge, our priority has always been the well-being and safety of every animal in our care. As we plan for 2025, we're taking an important step back to focus on strengthening the foundation of our sanctuary – both internally through governance and externally through operations. While we will pause taking in new residents for now, this decision allows us to direct resources toward much-needed infrastructure improvements that will enhance the lives of our current residents and prepare us for future rescues.

Our two main operational goals for the coming year include:

Improving Medical Care Facilities

Access to immediate and high-quality medical care is essential for ensuring the health and longevity of our animals. Currently, much of our treatment requires transporting animals to outside facilities, which can cause stress and delay care.

- **Plans Include:** Creating a dedicated on-site medical treatment and recovery area to handle routine checkups, vaccinations, and emergency procedures.
- **Enhanced Capabilities:** Equipping the space with diagnostic tools, treatment equipment, and separate recovery rooms to minimize stress and improve outcomes.

This upgrade will allow us to respond more quickly to medical emergencies, reduce costs associated with outside care, and provide a more comfortable recovery environment for animals.

Upgrading Safety Measures

The safety of our animals is paramount, and improving our infrastructure is critical to ensuring their well-being. Several of our existing safety measures are in need of updates to meet the demands of our growing sanctuary and protect against environmental challenges.

- **Plans Include:** Implementing drainage systems to prevent flooding during storms and upgrading pathways to ensure safe and efficient transport of animals and supplies. Upgrading current sleeping areas with electricity and heating and cooling options. Repairing feed stations.
- **Proactive Protection:** Incorporating additional safeguards like fire-resistant barriers, windbreaks, and weather shelters to prepare for extreme weather conditions. Upgrading feeding troughs with carriage bolts instead of screws or nails can prevent unnecessary injuries.

These upgrades are essential for creating a safe and secure environment where animals can live without fear of injury or exposure to harm.

These investments are critical for the long-term success of our sanctuary and the animals we serve. By focusing on these improvements, we're not only ensuring the highest standard of care for our current residents, but we're also preparing to rescue and better support more animals in the future.

What's Next for Sisu?



Strengthening Our Foundation for Long-Term Impact

At Sisu Refuge, we're not only committed to providing the best care for our animals but also to ensuring that our organization remains strong and sustainable for years to come. In 2025, we're focusing on internal growth by enhancing our governance and organizational capacity to better serve our mission.

Our goals for governance improvements include:

- **Strengthening Board Leadership:** Recruiting new board members with expertise in areas like fundraising, finance, and animal welfare to provide strategic guidance and support. We will also offer training opportunities to help our board become even more effective advocates for our mission.
- **Enhancing Financial Oversight:** Establishing a finance committee or advisory committee for implementing new tools for more transparent and efficient financial management, ensuring every dollar is used to its fullest potential.
- **Professional Development for Staff:** Investing in training and leadership development to build a strong, empowered team capable of carrying our mission forward.
- **Strategic & Succession Planning:** Conducting a comprehensive planning process to align our long-term goals with our resources, creating a clear roadmap for Sisu for the next 3-5 years. Developing a seamless leadership transition plan to ensure organizational stability and continuity for the future in case of death or disease.

These initiatives are essential investments in Sisu Refuge's future. By focusing on our internal structure and processes, we are not only ensuring the highest standards of care for our current residents but also creating a strong foundation to support our mission for years to come.

How You Can Help:

At Sisu Refuge, both our operational and governance goals are critical to fulfilling our mission. In 2025, we're focused on creating a sanctuary that not only meets the immediate needs of our animals but also builds the organizational strength required to support them for years to come. Your support plays a vital role in achieving both of these goals.

1. **Enhance Animal Care and Facilities:** Your gift helps us expand living spaces, upgrade medical care facilities, and improve safety measures to provide the highest standard of care for our current residents.
2. **Invest in Long-Term Sustainability:** By contributing to governance improvements, you help us strengthen our board leadership, implement financial oversight, and develop a strategic roadmap to ensure Sisu Refuge thrives well into the future.

Together, these efforts ensure that Sisu Refuge remains a place of safety, compassion, and hope—for the animals we care for today and for those we will serve in the years to come.

Here's how you can support these vital efforts:

Make a donation: Every contribution, large or small, directly supports our operational and governance goals.

Sponsor a specific initiative: Fund a key project like infrastructure upgrades, staff training, or strategic planning.

Share our mission: Help us reach more people by sharing our story with your network.

Your generosity fuels everything we do, and with your partnership, we can create a stronger, more sustainable Sisu Refuge. Thank you for believing in our mission and for being an integral part of this journey.

Financial Transparency



Being good stewards of funds

Over the past three years, Sisu Refuge has raised and allocated the following funds to support animal care, infrastructure improvements, and operational expenses. These funds have enabled us to rescue and care for over hundreds of animals, hire dedicated staff, and upgrade our facilities.

Year	Total Revenue:	Total Expenses:
2021	\$220,444	\$177,524
2022	\$390,399	\$397,999
2023	\$480,459	\$471,449
2024		

Between 2021 and 2023, we dedicated 75% of funds directly to animal care and infrastructure, focusing on expanding our sanctuary and improving the quality of life for our residents. Despite challenges, we operated efficiently, ensuring every dollar advanced our mission.

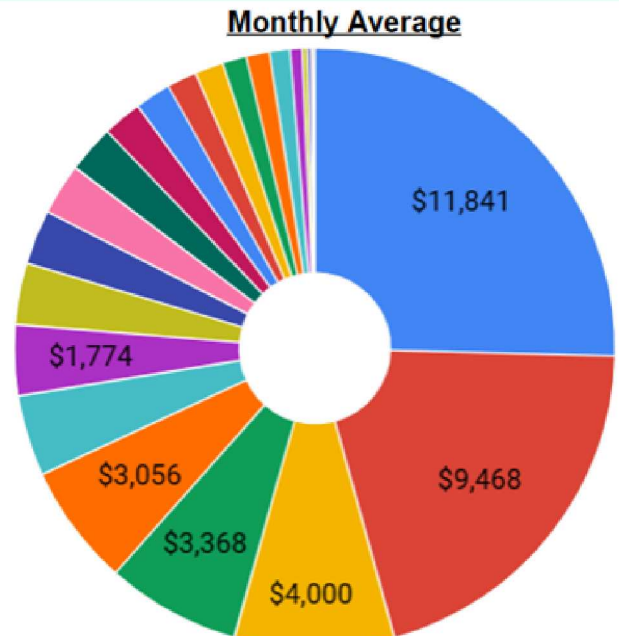
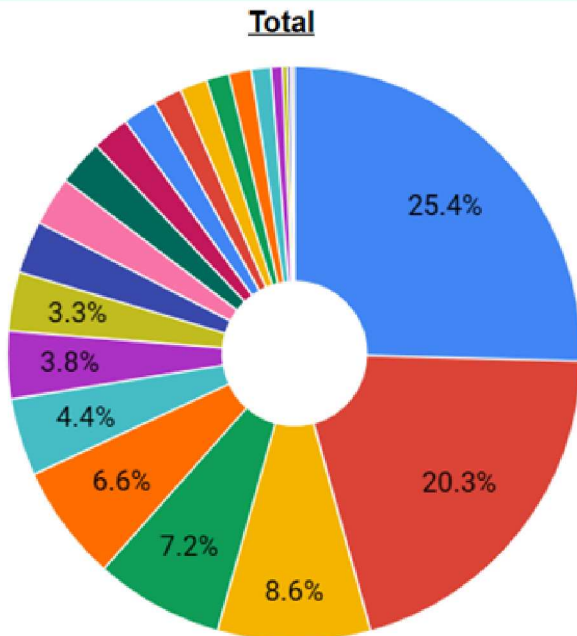
While our 2024 financial data is still being finalized, preliminary results indicate that we maintained similar allocation patterns, with the majority of funds directed toward animal care and operational improvements.

With a proven history of financial stewardship, we are confident that 2025 will be a transformative year. Your contributions will allow us to expand facilities, enhance care, and ensure Sisu Refuge continues to thrive for years to come.

To better understand our operating budget and spending patterns, we began meticulously tracking every deposit and withdrawal in 2022. This allows us to isolate specific expense categories and calculate monthly averages, helping us stay on budget. For example, animal feed and vet care are two of our largest expenses. With many large residents to care for, we provide an average of 21,000 pounds of custom-formulated feed each month. This specialty feed, costs approximately \$10,000 monthly while we can expect to spend nearly the same amount on veterinary care and staffing.

Expenses by Category

- Vet Care
- Feed | Produce
- Salaries
- Hourly Wages | Contractors
- Vehicle Paym...
- DELAYED PR...
- Equipment Pa...
- Gas
- Building Mate...
- Daily Care It...
- Mortgage | Re...
- Utilities - Elec...
- Medications
- 10 more



2024 Rescue Spotlight



Our followers are very invested in our rescue efforts for critical or urgent animals. They appreciate our quick response to animals in immediate danger. These are some of the notable rescues we did in 2024.



Max was spotted lying in the middle of the highway by a truck driver. He had a broken arm, and we immediately got him x-rays and were able to have him seen by an orthopedic specialist. Because he was so young, Max was able to heal with hardly any complications and has been thriving here since his rescue. He immediately bonded with a handicapped pig who we rescued earlier this year from a struggling sanctuary, named Puddin'.



Darla was found, wandering on the side of the road after jumping from a transport truck in the next county over. Animal control was planning to euthanize her as they had no where to put her, but one of the officer's reached out to see if we could help. Darla integrated into our retirement herd with ease and is the happiest pig we've ever met!



2024 Rescue Spotlight



Boo is a Sinclair pig, a breed usually used in biomedical research due to their small size and physiological similarity to humans. For much of her life, Boo was confined to a research facility, enduring procedures and a sterile, isolated environment designed for science -- not comfort or care.

Pigs in such facilities are often robbed of the basic joys that every living being deserves—freedom to explore, companionship, and even the feeling of the sun on their skin. Boo spent the first part of her life in a cold, clinical world, but despite it all, she has proven to be incredibly resilient and sweet!

Now, her story has taken a turn toward hope. Over the past couple of months here at Sisu Refuge, Boo has started to thrive and has been building friendships with other pigs! Boo is blossoming into a happy and confident girl, and watching her transformation has been nothing short of inspiring. Her courage and adaptability remind us every day why this work is so important, and her journey shows that every animal deserves a second chance at life.

This year, we had five unexpected puppy intakes! Four, Bruno, Luna, Cowboy, and Reba, were surrendered from a single litter, after two of their litter mates were killed by a car. One puppy, Ginger, was run over in front of our co-founder while he was running errands. All five puppies received vet care and are now part of loving families!



Let's Make 2025 Brighter!



Throughout this report, we've shared the incredible progress we've made over the years and the critical needs we face to sustain and grow our mission. Your support has always been the foundation of this work, and we're excited to offer meaningful ways for you to continue making a direct impact. With the year-end approaching, there's no better time to make a gift to Sisu Refuge. Not only will your donation help us provide life-saving care for our animals, but it's also tax-deductible for 2024.

Giving Options (Organized by Specific Needs):

Animal Care and Nutrition:

- \$10,000 provides one month of nutritious, custom-formulated feed for our residents.

Facility Improvements:

- \$2,500 supports the reseeded and rotating of pastures, providing sustainable forage for our animals and reducing feed costs.
- \$5,000 funds the construction of new shelters to protect animals from extreme weather.
- \$15,000 helps expand our medical facility, creating a dedicated space for treatment and recovery.

Medical Care Enhancements:

- \$2,000 funds routine veterinary checkups and annual vaccines for 10 animals.
- \$10,000 helps us purchase a mobile x-ray machine to reduce monthly veterinary costs by 50%.

Operational Support:

- \$1,000 supports administrative efforts, including grant writing, donor outreach, and sanctuary planning.
- \$2,500 helps cover essential staffing costs for one week, allowing our team to focus on delivering the highest level of care.

Transformational Giving:

- \$10,000 sponsors a critical infrastructure project like feeding stations or heating a barn.
- \$25,000 provides a significant investment in Sisu Refuge's long-term sustainability, enabling us to expand our programs.

Every gift, no matter the size, brings us closer to building a brighter future for the animals who call Sisu Refuge home. Thank you for considering how you can help us continue this vital work.



Thank You for Believing in Our Mission

We are so grateful for your past support and for considering how you can be part of this journey again. Your kindness and generosity have already changed lives, and we hope this report has shown how much your contributions truly mean to us. Your support, whether past or present, has allowed us to rescue, care for, and protect hundreds of animals over the years. We have always kept the animals our focus... and I hope you can see that from us.

If it's been some time since your last contribution, please know how deeply we appreciate the role you've played in our story. Every act of kindness—every donation, word of encouragement, or shared post—makes a difference.

We hope this report has reminded you of the incredible impact you've already made and the opportunities we have to do even more, together. If you feel inspired to rejoin our journey in 2025, we welcome your support in whatever way feels right to you!

From all of us at Sisu Refuge—humans and animals alike—thank you for believing in a world where every life matters. Your compassion truly changes lives, and we are so grateful to have you as part of our community.

With heartfelt gratitude,

Erika

What Sets Sisu Refuge Apart?



There are countless incredible and deserving organizations working tirelessly for animal welfare. So why choose to support Sisu Refuge? Here's what makes us truly stand out:

1. We Build Community, Not Competition

At Sisu Refuge, we believe rescue is a collaborative effort—not a competition. We actively support other sanctuaries by fundraising on their behalf and providing critical emergency assistance when they need it most. Our micro-grant program, Hannah's Piggy Bank, offered financial relief for urgent medical care to smaller or emerging 501c(3) organizations.

When we are unable to take in an animal ourselves, we always cover emergency vet care costs to ensure their survival. To our knowledge, we are the only sanctuary in the U.S. currently operating such a program. This reflects our deep commitment to building a supportive, compassionate rescue community where everyone wins—especially the animals.

2. We Are Responsible Stewards of Every Donation

We know that every dollar matters. That's why we stretch every resource as far as possible through hard work, creative solutions, and a focus on long-term sustainability. We reuse and repurpose materials whenever possible, ensuring that funds are prioritized toward urgent animal needs.

While we previously maintained a six-month reserve fund, shifting priorities and unexpected expenses have required us to adjust our financial planning. Looking ahead to 2025, we are committed to rebuilding this reserve fund to ensure long-term security for our animals, while continuing to maintain a \$10,000 emergency vet fund. We rescue responsibly and never use rescue situations as emotional leverage for fundraising. Transparency and accountability guide every decision we make.

3. We Champion Medical Advancements for Farmed Animals

We believe every animal—regardless of species—deserves access to advanced, university-level medical care. In 2023 alone, we spent over \$50,000 on veterinary care, ensuring that every resident received the highest level of treatment possible.

Our commitment goes beyond our own animals. We actively collaborate with veterinary teams to expand research and develop more effective treatments for farmed animals. By advocating for cutting-edge care, we aim to set a precedent for farmed animal medicine, helping universities advance research and create more treatment options that benefit animals far beyond our sanctuary's borders. We believe in driving medical innovation that improves the lives of animals everywhere.

4. We Partner with Local Authorities to Drive Change

We've built strong, trust-based relationships with farmers, animal control officials, and government agencies across more than a dozen NC counties. Many rural counties lack the facilities to house farmed animals, making it difficult to pursue cruelty charges. By serving as a trusted resource, we empower officials to push harder on charges that might otherwise be ignored. These partnerships have saved hundreds of lives and helped improve enforcement of animal welfare laws across the region. We are committed to being a force for change—not just within our refuge, but throughout the entire animal welfare system.

At Sisu Refuge, the work we do is a direct reflection of our organization's core values and purpose. We believe our mission adds great value to the animal rights movement by setting a standard for ethical, transparent, and compassionate animal rescue. Supporting us means investing in sustainable change, collaborative progress, and a future where every life matters.

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