

Illinois pig part of swine genome project

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A pig used for research at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign will have its DNA provide the first sequence of the swine genome.

Lawrence B. Schook, a professor of animal sciences and co-chairman of the International Swine Genome Sequencing Consortium, will head the project that is expected to cost \$20 million and involve researchers at seven other institutions.

Sequencing of the some 2.5 billion chemical base pairs that spell out the pig's genetic code will be done at the Wellcome Trust Sanger Institute in the United Kingdom. The groundwork for the project has grown over time at Illinois through extensive swine research, the development of genetic tools and a campus commitment to pursue genome-related research with the establishment of the Institute for Genomic Biology, Schook said.

"Now we can take all of the pieces and put them into their correct order and know the exact DNA sequence in each piece," Schook said.

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